

July 31, 2017

City of Venice

401 W. Venice Avenue

Venice, FL 34285

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. There are many reasons why this action should not go ahead. The foremost is that as an assessment it does not fall under the rules that govern property taxes with the protections and exemptions. You really need to budget better.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "D. L. Frederick", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Donald L Frederick

Owner, 731 Gardens Edge Drive

309 472-3984

Barbara and John Hassell  
447 Nokomis Avenue South  
Venice, FL 34285

July 28, 2018

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

Re: Public hearing to consider imposition and collection of fire protection special assessments.

Dear Venice Council.

We write to comment on the public August 21 public hearing regarding imposition of a fire protection special assessment. We have two specific comments. We object to the method being proposed to calculate the assessment, and we object to the notion that a special fire assessment should be used instead of city tax revenues to support the fire department.

1. The city proposes to add a fire protection fee. In item #2 below, we note our general objection to instituting a user fee rather than increasing taxes. If the City Council proceeds and imposes the user fee, then we object to the way the proposed fee is calculated. The fee significantly disadvantages condominium owners. The fee should be based upon taxable value, not structural value. *Taxable value is the base for imposing property taxes*, and it should be the base for any user fee imposed.
2. Fire protection is a shared responsibility of city / county government and we believe it should be paid by general tax revenues. It is clear that, under the guise of a user fee, the City simply wants to increase its revenues, and is unwilling to increase taxes to meet the city's responsibility. Further, the fee is not meant to be a special assessment but an ongoing assessment. The letter notes that fire services have been underfunded. Failure to raise taxes in the past to adequately maintain the fire department could be a reason to increase property taxes now to compensate for current needs. If a fire protection fee is instituted, then what will keep the City from imposing other fees. Other city services also do not have dedicated revenue streams. For example, the police department provides services; will the city council impose a special police fee to all property owners in Venice. The city provides stop signs and stop lights. Will the city impose a fee on all vehicle owners to support stop signs and stop lights? The list of services provided is endless.

We believe that a dedicated fee (tax) to support each individual service is not good public policy. The city should levy general property and sales taxes to support the needs of the city.

3. Property taxes are deductible on a Federal tax return. By calling the new tax a user fee, those individuals who itemize on their tax returns are disadvantaged because user fees are not deductible. The July 20 special assessment notice intentionally tries to downplay this issue by the statement "consult their tax advisors." From IRS Publication 17, see the following.

***Real Estate-Related Items You Can't Deduct***

Payments for the following items generally aren't deductible as real estate taxes.

- Taxes for local benefits.
- Itemized charges for services (such as trash and garbage pickup fees).
- Transfer taxes (or stamp taxes).
- Rent increases due to higher real estate taxes.
- Homeowners' association charges.

The fire protection special assessment is both a fee for local benefits and evidently will be an itemized charge for services. Thus, it will not be tax deductible.

In conclusion, we urge the city council not to impose the "special assessment" fee, but rather to meet the needs of the City through general tax revenues (recognizing that our property taxes would probably increase). Second, if the special assessment fee is imposed, then we strongly believe that it *should be based upon taxable value*, the same measure used in property tax assessment. Using structural value disadvantages condominium owners versus other type of users.

Sincerely,

  
Barbara Hassell

  
John Hassell



796 Capri Isles Blvd  
Unit 129  
Venice, FL 34292

July 29, 2017


City Council  
City of Venice  
401 West Venice Ave.  
Venice, FL 34285

Dear City Council Members,

On July 25, 2017, we received your letter re: Fire Protection Special Assessments that was dated July 20, 2017. Please be advised that we are totally opposed to a special assessment to cover fire department services. Firstly, there will be a substantial cost for enacting and collecting this special assessment. Secondly, the information you provided does not even guarantee that this special assessment will be deductible on our income tax returns. Current real estate property taxes are deductible.

Given the recent improved fire rating, we are perplexed that the City still claims a need for more fire protection finances. But, if in fact this is valid, we feel these costs should be covered with the revenue generated by the millage tax rate. If the rate is too low, raise it to cover these costs. Revenue raised as part of real estate taxes should cover all city costs. It appears that special assessments are the result of poor planning and budget execution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Scott L. McCann", with a stylized, looping flourish at the end.

Scott L. McCann

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Cheryl A. McCann", with a stylized, flowing script.

Cheryl A. McCann

Ms. Polly Bellanca Fatta  
1041 Capris Isles Blvd.  
#224  
Venice, FL 34292

July 29, 2017

Honorable John Holie and  
City Council Members  
401 W. Venice Avenue  
Venice, FL 34285

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

To Whom it may concern:

I am a property owner of a condo at Golf Green located at 1041 Capri Isles Blvd in Venice, FL. I was dismayed to get notice of this special assessment. Unfortunately, I will be out of Town on August 21 so I will not be able to attend the public meeting, but did want to voice my concerns.

This assessment seems out of line with my property taxes, since in future years it can potentially increase my taxes/assessment by 1/3 for one line item service. I totally recognize the importance of our fire department, but feel that it is a bit exorbitant to increase annual taxes by 1/3.

I, as many others, live on a fixed income and this sudden increase will cause me a large financial burden.

I sincerely ask that this assessment be eliminated by combining one of three firehouses into two cut or reduce it to a more reasonable amount.

Thank your for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Polly Bellanca Fatta". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Polly" being more prominent.

Polly Bellanca Fatta

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

*Jim Gleason*  
1041 Capri Isles Blvd.  
#211  
Venice FL 34292



Mr. Richard Fatt  
1041 Capris Isles Blvd.  
#224  
Venice, FL 34292

July 29, 2017

Honorable John Holc and  
City Council Members  
401 W. Venice Avenue  
Venice, FL 34285

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

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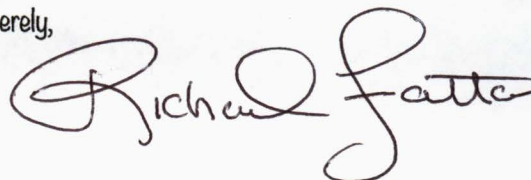
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Thank your for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Richard Fatta". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" and the last name "Fatta" clearly legible.

Richard Fatta

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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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

*Geraldine A. Grush*



Geraldine Grush  
1041 Capri Isles Blvd Apt 231  
Venice, FL 34292-1588



From: Robert Daniels

Sent: Thursday, August 03, 2017 11:13 AM

To: Edward Lavalley <ELavalley@Venicegov.com>; Shawn Carvey <SCarvey@Venicegov.com>; Linda Senne <LSenne@Venicegov.com>; Joe Welch <JWelch@Venicegov.com>; Jeff Cripe <JCripe@Venicegov.com>; Frank Giddens <FGiddens@Venicegov.com>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>

Cc: earle.kimel@heraldtribune.com; ggiles@venicegondolier.com; Charles Newsom <CNewsom@Venicegov.com>; Emilo Carlesimo <emiliocc@outlook.com>; Lorraine Anderson <LAnderson@Venicegov.com>; Lenox E. Bramble <LBramble@Venicegov.com>

Subject: Fire Fee.....Bay Indies

Tony and Linda worked on the numbers to make sure they were correct and the residents will see a small increase of \$14.78 for their 1500 residents to help run a safe department.

One could assume this rate would be close to the other 5,000 residents living in mobile in Venice.

Another note with our total tax bill;

- County has voted not to raise any millage

- School board has voted to reduce millage

- Other services on tax bill have indicated any change

Regards,

Councilman Bob Daniels

City Of Venice , Florida

**From:** Chris Roe [<mailto:croe@bmolaw.com>]

**Sent:** Thursday, August 03, 2017 10:59 AM

**To:** Joe Welch <[JWelch@Venicegov.com](mailto:JWelch@Venicegov.com)>; [erick.vanmalssen@stantec.com](mailto:erick.vanmalssen@stantec.com)

**Cc:** Linda Senne <[LSenne@Venicegov.com](mailto:LSenne@Venicegov.com)>

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

Erick can weigh in, but my initial thought is that even though a condominium unit does may not have a land component in the same way a single family home does (though condos do typically have common elements, the value of which is reflected in the taxable value assigned to each unit by the property appraiser), the Tier 1 charge is based on the readiness benefit conveyed to each "parcel" which could place or cause a call for service. *Parcel* in this context includes condominium units which are recognized as such under Florida law and which are assigned discrete parcel identification numbers by the PA for tax purposes, even though they may not represent or include a "land parcel" or tract of land, within the common usage of the terms.

Condos are a special case in that land value is not separately accounted for by the PA and therefore can't be excluded for purposes of the Tier 2 calculation. The rationale addressing the condo circumstance is addressed in section 1.04(Q) of the initial assessment resolution which I copied and pasted below. This is the same rationale used by other cities which have adopted the readiness/availability method.

(Q) The formula utilized to derive Tier 2 of the Fire Protection Assessment generally excludes any reasonably ascertainable or severable land value since the land associated with any given Tax Parcel (and the value of such land) will remain even in the event of a total loss fire incident. In the case of condominiums or similar statutory regimes where land value (1) can become a common element by law, (2) is no longer easily severable, (3) may not be isolated, separately identified or determined by the Property Appraiser, or (4) is necessarily not used separately in the Tax Roll preparation process for valuation purposes, just value fairly and reasonably represents the measure for Tier 2 of the Fire Protection Assessment. This is reasonable because the legal structure of condominium or similar common ownership materially restricts the severability of a specific or individual unit created under a statutory regime from any associated parcel of

land. Effectively this limitation conveys benefit that might otherwise exist from land and any other shared common features back to the statutorily recognized unit itself in the form of improvement value. This valuation treatment in a statutorily-created common ownership regime differs from the example of a typical house and lot in which the house might be severed or removed physically by the owner from any associated land to be subsequently replaced with a materially larger or more valuable improvement which can be appraised separately if necessary.

Chris

**From:** Joe Welch [<mailto:JWelch@Venicegov.com>]

**Sent:** Thursday, August 3, 2017 9:28 AM

**To:** [erick.vanmalssen@stantec.com](mailto:erick.vanmalssen@stantec.com); Chris Roe

**Cc:** Linda Senne

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

Erick and Chris-

I think this gentleman writes a good letter. It is true that there are quite a few condos in our City which report no land value in the property records. Percentage-wise, these properties are seeing a big increase in their combined property tax plus fire assessment over the prior year.

On this one issue, do you think it is fair to charge these owners a tier 1 charge when there is no land included in their assessed values? Do we have any other options on this point?

Joe

PS: I'm sure this point will come up at the hearing



**From:** John Holic

**Sent:** Thursday, August 03, 2017 7:41 AM

**To:** Joe Terranova <jatnova@cox.net>; 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:** Joseph Terranova <jatnova@cox.net>; Sally Terranova - Gmail <swtnova@gmail.com>

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

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Terranova,

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

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

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**From:** Joe Terranova <jatnova@cox.net>

**Sent:** Wednesday, August 2, 2017 8:15:14 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:** Joseph Terranova; Sally Terranova - Gmail

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

Venice City Officials,

Attached is a letter formally objecting to the proposed City Ordinance 2017-23 – Fire Protection Special Assessment.

Thank you,

Joseph A. Terranova

Sarah W. Terranova

427 Nokomis Ave S

Venice, FL 34285

401 559-7964

Joseph A. Terranova  
427 Nokomis Ave S  
Venice, FL 34285  
401 559-7964

August 2, 2017

City of Venice Officials  
401 West Venice Ave  
Venice, FL 34285

Subject: Objection to Proposed Ordinance 2017-23; Fire Protection Special Assessment.

Dear City Officials,

The purpose of this letter is to formally file an objection to proposed Ordinance 2017-23; Fire Protection Special Assessment.

Prior to moving to Florida I was a member of a volunteer Fire Department in Rhode Island for over 30 years and know first-hand the value of excellent, sustainable fire protection. However, the taxes / assessments to support any fire department must be fair, reasonable and equitable for all property owners (taxpayers).

The Fire Protection Special Assessment, aka "fire tax", for my 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 web site. 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.

My increase for 2018 is proposed to be \$445.05 or a **52% increase** in City taxes and in subsequent years it could go as high as \$890.83 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 especially regarding the new police station. I know I would have!

The Townhouses at Island Court Venice are fairly new having been built 2014-15 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 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 conundrum 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,

  
Joseph A. Terranova

  
Sarah W. Terranova



**From:** John Holic

**Sent:** Thursday, August 03, 2017 8:37 AM

**To:** Lorraine Anderson <LAnderson@Venicegov.com>; Gene Shepherd <geshepha87@icloud.com>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>; Lori Stelzer <LStelzer@Venicegov.com>; Edward Lavallee <ELavallee@Venicegov.com>; Lenox E. Bramble <LBramble@Venicegov.com>; Linda Senne <LSenne@Venicegov.com>

**Cc:** Judy Gamel <JGamel@Venicegov.com>

**Subject:** Re: PROPOSED ASSESSMENT FOR FIRE DEPARTMENT

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

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

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From: Lorraine Anderson <[landerson@venicegov.com](mailto:landerson@venicegov.com)>

Sent: Thursday, August 3, 2017 7:22 AM

Subject: RE: PROPOSED ASSESSMENT FOR FIRE DEPARTMENT

To: Gene Shepherd <[geshepha87@icloud.com](mailto:geshepha87@icloud.com)>, City Council <[citycouncil@venicegov.com](mailto:citycouncil@venicegov.com)>, Lori Stelzer <[lstelzer@venicegov.com](mailto:lstelzer@venicegov.com)>, Edward Lavallee <[elavallee@venicegov.com](mailto:elavallee@venicegov.com)>, Lenox E. Bramble <[lbramble@venicegov.com](mailto:lbramble@venicegov.com)>, Linda Senne <[lsenne@venicegov.com](mailto:lsenne@venicegov.com)>

Cc: Judy Gamel <[jgamel@venicegov.com](mailto:jgamel@venicegov.com)>

Certainly, Mr. Shepherd. Thank you.

I am forwarding your comments to Mayor John Holic and Council, City Manager Ed Lavallee, Assistant City Manager Len Bramble, City Clerk Lori Stelzer and the Finance Director Linda Senne.

Best,

Lorraine Anderson

City of Venice Public Information Officer

401 West Venice Avenue

Venice, FL 34285

Via City Hall Switchboard: (941) 486-2626 ext. 7401

Direct: (941) 882-7401

[www.venicegov.com](http://www.venicegov.com)

Like us on Facebook: Venice, Florida Municipal Government

Twitter: @CityofVeniceFL

Instagram: CityofVeniceFlorida

“From there to here, from here to there, funny things are everywhere.”

— Dr. Seuss, One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish

-----Original Message-----

From: Gene Shepherd [<mailto:geshepha87@icloud.com>]

Sent: Wednesday, August 02, 2017 5:08 PM

To: Lorraine Anderson <[LAnderson@Venicegov.com](mailto:LAnderson@Venicegov.com)>

Subject: PROPOSED ASSESSMENT FOR FIRE DEPARTMENT

I CANNOT BE PRESENT FOR THE SCHEDULED HEARINGS.

WILL YOU PLEASE FORWARD MY COMMENTS OR DIRECT ME TO A PERSON OR SITE?

I SUPPORT THE SEPARATION THE FIRE DEPARTMENTS BUDGET.

I DO NOT SUPPORT ALLOWIING INCREASES TO OCCUR WITHOUT A SPECIFIC TERM LIMIT, CAPS LESS THAN THOSE PROPOISED AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

I REQUIRE A SPECIFIC FIRM ASSURANCE FROM THE CITY COUNCIL THAT IF THE ASSESSMENT IS APPROVED EEH MILEAGE RATE WILL BE DECREASED.

8 Gulf Manor Drive  
Venice, Florida 34285  
July 31, 2017

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

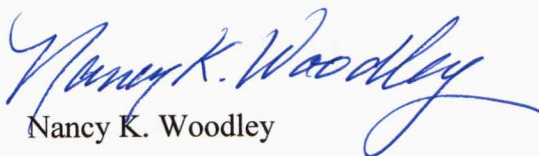
Subject: Imposition of Fire Assessments

Dear Mayor and City Council:

I recently received a notice of a public hearing to be held August 21, 2017 to receive public comment of the proposed special assessments. The example used for calculating the fire assessments was based on a \$65,000 parcel. Noting that is an unusually low value that doesn't represent the average value of homes in this city, I used my 2016 tax valuation to see what this proposal will cost me. My additional costs for the FY 2018 rate will be \$454.67 versus \$187.17 savings on the proposed 3.1 mil ad valorem tax or \$267.50 more than last year. Calculating the FY 2019 proposed rate, fire fees will be \$910.09 versus \$187.17 savings on a proposed 3.1 mil ad valorem tax or a net additional cost of \$722.92. That represents a 50% increase in the present tax! I've also been informed by my CPA that I will no longer be able to write that cost off as a deductible as I have been doing because fire service was covered by ad valorem taxes and this proposed fire assessment is not deductible from my income tax.

With your passing two major bond issues and now this, I'm sure a lot of residents in Venice will be quite upset with this continuing rise in taxes caused by your recent actions. Please be more forthcoming at the August 21 meeting to insure that taxpaying residents really know the impact now before you carry out your intentions to adopt this fire fee. I have always supported our fire service but spare me the smoke and mirrors of using an unrealistic sample value to explain the consequences of your proposal and dodge the fact that a fire fee is not deductible from your income taxes.

Sincerely,

  
Nancy K. Woodley

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



July 27, 2017

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

DISTRIBUTED:  
✓ Mayor/Council  
✓ City Clerk  
City Manager  
Staff

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.

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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

Carol A. Crane  
Unit 232

I am on a fixed income and can't afford an increase of this size.

701 Gondola Park Drive  
Venice, Florida 34292-2394  
July 31, 2017

CERTIFIED – RETURN RECEIPT

City of Venice  
City Council  
401 West Venice Avenue  
Venice, Florida 34285

DISTRIBUTED:  
✓ Mayor/Council  
✓ City Clerk  
\_\_\_\_ City Manager  
\_\_\_\_ Staff

Re: City of Venice Fire Assessment FY 2018

City of Venice Parcel No.0411113049  
701 Gondola Park Drive  
Venice Fl. 34292-2394

And

City of Venice Parcel No.0411113050  
702 Gondola Park Drive  
Venice Fl. 34292-2394

Sirs:

We are in receipt of your notice July 20, 2017 in the above matter and wish to comment on your proposal.

To preface, we are the owners of the above properties and are permanent residents of The City of Venice at these locations. Neither property is offered for rent.

We have reviewed your proposals, and while your theoretical argument for dedicated tax revenues raises some interest, we find that your attempt to squeeze in a significant real estate tax raise in the proposal is appalling. Assuming in the following that the property valuations will not increase for FY 2018 and the following years, and that the City of Venice assessment will decrease by .5 mills for those periods, you have proposed increases for our properties by 1.06 mills for FY 2018 and 3.1 mills for succeeding fiscal years. This amounts to over \$600.00 or 20% for each of our two properties even though our properties are evaluated somewhat below the median for our area.

For those fiscal years after 2018 your assessment of 3.1 mills will equal City of Venice's proposed assessment for its other operations. Without specific fiscal intentions stated for the fire department, we find this proposal quite astonishing. The fire department alone will cost as much as the rest of Venice's needs. We find that the City Council's request for 8.4 million dollars per year on a continuing basis needs further study before being enacted.



Further, where did the financing for the fire department funding come from? What will happen to those funds once a dedicated special assessment is established? Was the City assessment the only source of funding, or did Sarasota County or another agency provide additional funding in their assessment used for our fire protection?

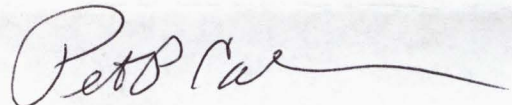
There are also some 19,000 residential units, as well as a thousands of commercial properties in Venice. If you divide the \$8.4 million proposal by the 19,000 residential units alone, the average increase should be \$442.10. Given the imbalance created by the higher number of high value properties in the city, the burden placed on these properties will be proportionately higher. If commercial properties are included, the increase should be significantly lower. Your math just doesn't add up.

It has also come to our attention that new construction creates a gap in our protection needs. Why hasn't the new construction been assessed for these additions placing the burden of additional fire department infrastructure on the new units?


Finally, we also find that the creation of a special assessment will segregate the fire department needs from those other demands placed on City governance. This will allow the Council to side step the fiscal responsibility and the political consequences of your decisions. It takes away the responsibility of having to weigh your decisions in light of all of the needs of the City and places that burden in the hands of the citizenry who elected you to make those kinds of decisions.

The 20% increase in our future taxes for my units will assert a substantial burden on our finances. We find this onerous and with suspicion. We hope you will reconsider your proposal, and table any increase until it is fully accounted for and justified in public.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Peter P. Calarco".

Peter P Calarco

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Joan B. Calarco".

Joan B Calarco



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. I did call and talked to the Controller of Venice and he did indicate he too would pass on my concerns.

My taxes are \$800+ a year so this assessment seems out of line with that since in future years it will 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.)

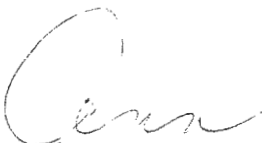
Special assessments in condo's generally have a one time life span not an ongoing undetermined life span which could increase as time goes on.

My 95 year old mother also lives in this complex and lives on a fixed income as many of us do. She is not the only elderly person living here either. 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 awful big increase from 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  
Ann Potter (unit 229) and my mother ( unit 205)



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

Randy Snyder  
Jeannette Snyder  
#209

820 Capri Isles Blvd  
102  
Venice, FL 34292  
July 27, 2017

City Council  
City of Venice  
401 West Venice Ave.  
Venice, FL 34285

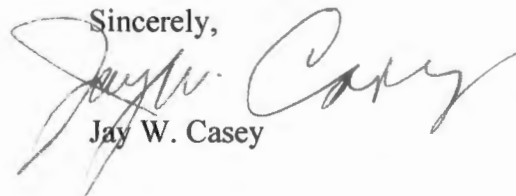
✓  
✓

Dear Council members,

I am totally against a special assessment to cover fire department services. These costs should be covered in the taxes raised by the millage rate. If the rate is too low, raise it to cover these costs. Special assessments are a Pandora's box. What would be next, police department costs, DPW, city employees, pension shortfalls? Revenue should be raised as part of real estate taxes to cover all city costs, not through special assessments.

Most special assessments are the result of poor planning and execution. Perhaps we need a new city council that can better manage fiscal concerns.

Sincerely,



Jay W. Casey

Jon B Wampler  
104 Plum Ridge Way  
Sellersburg, IN 47172



July 28, 2017

Re: Fire Protection Special Assessment

Dear Council,

I am writing to express my concern and objection to the proposed fire protection special assessments. While I agree that provision of fire protection is essential, I am concerned that it has been adequately funded until now, and suddenly, the Council and Financial Office have determined that it is or has been severely underfunded and now warrants very significant and ongoing and ever increasing assessments.

We are told by doing so, it frees other money up for the Council to spend on "other projects". Instead, why isn't the council proposing funding for those other projects, instead of concealing their funding under the guise of fire protection?

The structure of the program is unacceptable because it has no limits. The resulting high dollar impacts of those assessments are also unacceptable. A small incremental increase to the ad-valorem tax rate would make far more sense, and would, of course, significantly reduce revenues you are trying to raise. But a 10% to 25% increase to annual real estate taxes is not the acceptable.

Nowhere in the letter does it cite that the money will be used to obtain or replace aging equipment, upgrade or supplement a fire protection infrastructure or staff that is deficient, obsolete, under staffed or under trained.

This is simply a guise to free up money for other "hidden" projects at tax-payer expense.

I urge the Council to vote "no".

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jon B. Wampler".  
Jon B Wampler

Property Owner: 602 Tyson Terrace, Venice FL 34285



**From:** John Holic  
**Sent:** Monday, July 31, 2017 4:39 PM  
**To:** John Nilsen-San Lino Condo Assoc. <nilsen.sanlino@aol.com>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>  
**Cc:** Edward Lavalley <ELavalley@Venicegov.com>  
**Subject:** Re: Special Assessment vote for fire protection

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

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**From:** John Nilsen-San Lino Condo Assoc. <[nilsen.sanlino@aol.com](mailto:nilsen.sanlino@aol.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 31, 2017 2:19:30 PM  
**To:** City Council  
**Subject:** Special Assessment vote for fire protection

Please note that I am against a special assessment .

John Nilsen  
1000 San Lino Circle #1011  
Vencie FL 34292

**From:** John Holic  
**Sent:** Monday, July 31, 2017 5:05 PM  
**To:** nfishw@aol.com; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>  
**Subject:** Re: Imposition of Fire Fees

Dear Ms. Woodley,  
On behalf of Venice City Council, thank you for your comments.  
Sincerely,  
John Holic  
Mayor, City of Venice

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**From:** [nfishw@aol.com](mailto:nfishw@aol.com) <[nfishw@aol.com](mailto:nfishw@aol.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 31, 2017 11:12:33 AM  
**To:** City Council  
**Subject:** Imposition of Fire Fees

The attached letter is a copy of the hard copy I'm sending via regular mail. The gist of it is that your proposed fire fee (assessment) will have a net affect of not only increasing what Venice taxpayers provide now but also taking away the deductible nature we benefit from paying our fire fees as part of the present ad valorem tax. The net affect after FY 2018 will cause an approximately 50% increase in the amount of money we're paying now and will take away deductibility of this big increase.

**From:** John Holic  
**Sent:** Monday, July 31, 2017 5:09 PM  
**To:** Margaret Bilda <peggie659@aol.com>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>  
**Cc:** Edward Lavalley <ELavalley@Venicegov.com>  
**Subject:** Re: Fire Tax Assessment

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

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**From:** Margaret Bilda <[peggie659@aol.com](mailto:peggie659@aol.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 31, 2017 2:45:01 PM  
**To:** City Council  
**Subject:** Fire Tax Assessment

This letter is an objection to the proposed assessment for the following reasons;

1. The proposal is a yearly assessment and not special as indicated.
2. An August 21 hearing is inconvenient to most owners.
3. If needed, funding should be part of the yearly budget and accumulated and disbursed through the tax base.
4. The amount reflects a significant and unfair percentage increase.
5. Attempts to lower fire costs should be made.
  - a. fewer response vehicles.
  - b. fewer employees during the April- December months.
6. Incorrect information concerning parcel at 995 Laguna Drive should be addressed. Tier 2 should reflect 56 units. This will increase the divisor and reduce numbers in both tiers.

Richard Bilda, President  
Casa Seville Condominium Association  
995 Laguna Drive  
Venice 34285

**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



Laurence Sentiff  
811 Waterside Dr  
206  
Venice FL 34285

August 1, 2017

City of Venice  
401 Venice Ave  
Venice FL 34285

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter in opposition to the proposal to impose a special assessment for "fire Protection Services"

The people of Venice that are subject to this special assessment should understand that once assessed, this "tax" will never go away. In the event the municipality finds itself able to reduce taxes, this special assessment has no way of being removed.

In addition I am against any "dedicated" source of funding for any purpose of taxation. We don't need dedicated funding for any other type of municipal operation. (Why not have dedicated funding for municipal employee salary? I think the question answers itself.) Why should we need it for Fire Services? What is needed is fiscal restraint and fair taxation.

Additionally, you have chosen to hold a public forum during a time of year when many residents are absent from their homes. This is an unconscionable act, that can only conger up thought of taxation by those unable to face their constituents.

Further, your discussion of the millage rate in the letter sent to residents does a poor job of explaining tax rates to the average person, I for one would like to know the effect of a millage rate reduction of 0.5000 on my tax bill.

Finally, your letter outlines no plan for fiscal restraint regarding fire or any other services provided by the city of Venice.

Once again, I am stating that I am strongly opposed to this special tax as stated in your letter dated July 20, 2017

Respectfully,

Laurence J Sentiff

**From:** John Holic  
**Sent:** Monday, July 31, 2017 6:12 PM  
**To:** entiff@gmail.com; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>  
**Subject:** Re: Letter to city of Venice

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

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From: [entiff@gmail.com](mailto:entiff@gmail.com)  
Sent: Monday, July 31, 2017 3:39 PM  
Subject: Letter to city of Venice  
To: City Council <[citycouncil@venicegov.com](mailto:citycouncil@venicegov.com)>

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

**From:** John Holic

**Sent:** Monday, July 31, 2017 8:02 PM

**To:** Larry Cardarelli <[ljcardarelli@comcast.net](mailto:ljcardarelli@comcast.net)>; Kit McKeon <[KMCKEON@venicegov.com](mailto:KMCKEON@venicegov.com)>; Richard Cautero <[RCautero@Venicegov.com](mailto:RCautero@Venicegov.com)>; Robert Daniels <[RDaniels@Venicegov.com](mailto:RDaniels@Venicegov.com)>; Fred Fraize <[FFraize@Venicegov.com](mailto:FFraize@Venicegov.com)>; Deborah Anderson <[DAAnderson@Venicegov.com](mailto:DAAnderson@Venicegov.com)>; Jeanette Gates <[JGates@Venicegov.com](mailto:JGates@Venicegov.com)>

**Cc:** [trooney@floridagov.com](mailto:trooney@floridagov.com); Edward Lavalley <[ELavalley@Venicegov.com](mailto:ELavalley@Venicegov.com)>; Lori Stelzer <[LStelzer@Venicegov.com](mailto:LStelzer@Venicegov.com)>

**Subject:** Re: OBJECTION TO....Proposed Special Fire Protection Special assessment.....

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Cardarelli,

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

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

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From: Larry Cardarelli <[ljcardarelli@comcast.net](mailto:ljcardarelli@comcast.net)>

Sent: Monday, July 31, 2017 5:57 PM

Subject: OBJECTION TO....Proposed Special Fire Protection Special assessment.....

To: John Holic <[jholic@venicegov.com](mailto:jholic@venicegov.com)>, Kit McKeon <[kmckeon@venicegov.com](mailto:kmckeon@venicegov.com)>, Richard Cautero <[rcautero@venicegov.com](mailto:rcautero@venicegov.com)>, Robert Daniels <[rdaniels@venicegov.com](mailto:rdaniels@venicegov.com)>, Fred Fraize <[ffraize@venicegov.com](mailto:ffraize@venicegov.com)>, Deborah Anderson <[danderson@venicegov.com](mailto:danderson@venicegov.com)>, Jeanette Gates <[jgates@venicegov.com](mailto:jgates@venicegov.com)>

Cc: <[trooney@floridagov.com](mailto:trooney@floridagov.com)>

**To: Mayor of Venice and Venice FL City Council Members,**

**July 31, 2017**

## **RE. - PROPOSED FIRE PROTECTION SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS**

We are writing this letter in response to a notification we received regarding the proposed Fire Protection Special Assessments.

This so called "Special Assessment" is nothing but a property tax increase and will result in an undue burden upon us and other retired residence of Venice who are on a fixed income and simply cannot afford it. We are vehemently opposed to the implementation of this huge 'Fire Protection Special Assessment'.

This special assessment is absurd and will increase my property tax payment 4.3% over last year's assessment and possibly another 4.1% in 2018, resulting a total increase of 8.6% in 2 years. You are asking us and the residents of Venice to fund your operating shortfall. It is obvious to us, we are being asked to bear the burden of irresponsible fiscal planning. Venice needs to re-assess its operating account and find these funds

from development interest or make the cuts necessary in lieu of implementing a special assessment.

A fellow Venice resident and friend has made it known to me and others "The good people of Venice have worked hard to save and budget their money to live within their means, the City of Venice should do the same."

Helen and I, as well as everyone I know in Venice, strongly urge you abandon this proposal and find the funds you need without raising taxes or fees.

RESPECTFULLY,

LARRY AND HELEN CARDARELLI  
1211 CAPRI ISLES BLVD #57  
VENICE, FLORIDA 34292

Cc;

Thomas Rooney; State Representative.....[trooney@floridagov.com](mailto:trooney@floridagov.com)

John Holic, Mayor.....[jholic@venicegov.com](mailto:jholic@venicegov.com)

Kit McKeon, City Council.....[kmckeon@venicegov.com](mailto:kmckeon@venicegov.com)

Richard Cautero, City Council.....[rcautero@venicegov.com](mailto:rcautero@venicegov.com)

Bob Daniels, City Council.....[rdaniels@venicegov.com](mailto:rdaniels@venicegov.com)

Fred Fraize, City Council.....[ffraize@venicegov.com](mailto:ffraize@venicegov.com)

Deborah Anderson, City Council.....[danderson@venicegov.com](mailto:danderson@venicegov.com)

Jeanette Gates, City Council.....[jgates@venicegov.com](mailto:jgates@venicegov.com)



**From:** Linda Senne

**Sent:** Tuesday, August 01, 2017 8:22 AM

**To:** peggie659@aol.com

**Cc:** Lori Stelzer <LStelzer@Venicegov.com>; Edward Lavallee <ELavallee@Venicegov.com>; Joe Welch <JWelch@Venicegov.com>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>

**Subject:** RE: Fire Tax Assessment

Good Morning Mr. Bilda,

Here is the calculation for #6 below in your e-mail, for 995 Laguna Dr. # 604, Property # 0175061039

**Calculation of Fire Assessment for 995 Laguna Dr. #604**

Per Parcel	Tier 1	93.92
Structure Value / 5,000 round down	Tier 2	163.54
	Total	257.46

**Calculation of Tier 2 amount**

Structure Value is	172,600
divided by	5,000
= Equivalent Benefit Unit (EBU)	34
x \$4.81 per unit	
= Tier 2 amount	163.54

Thanks

Linda Senne

-----Original Message-----

From: Lori Stelzer

Sent: Monday, July 31, 2017 4:50 PM

To: Linda Senne <[LSenne@Venicegov.com](mailto:LSenne@Venicegov.com)>

Subject: FW: Fire Tax Assessment

Linda,

I'll include this email when we send all of them, but this one has a comment that you might want to address now - see #6 below. Thanks.

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

-----Original Message-----

From: Margaret Bilda [<mailto:peggie659@aol.com>]

Sent: Monday, July 31, 2017 4:45 PM

To: City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>  
Subject: Fire Tax Assessment

This letter is an objection to the proposed assessment for the following reasons;

1. The proposal is a yearly assessment and not special as indicated.
2. An August 21 hearing is inconvenient to most owners.
3. If needed, funding should be part of the yearly budget and accumulated and disbursed through the tax base.
4. The amount reflects a significant and unfair percentage increase.
5. Attempts to lower fire costs should be made.
  - a. fewer response vehicles.
  - b. fewer employees during the April- December months.
6. Incorrect information concerning parcel at 995 Laguna Drive should be addressed. Tier 2 should reflect 56 units. This will increase the divisor and reduce numbers in both tiers.

Richard Bilda, President  
Casa Seville Condominium Association  
995 Laguna Drive  
Venice 34285

**From:** John Holic

**Sent:** Tuesday, August 01, 2017 10:43 AM

**To:** The Two Euds <kkeudy@yahoo.com>

**Cc:** Al Maio <amaio@scgov.net>; Charles D. Hines <chines@scgov.net>; mmoran@scgov.net; ncdetert@scgov.net; Paul Caragiulo <pcaragiulo@scgov.net>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>; Edward Lavalley <ELavalley@Venicegov.com>; Linda Senne <LSenne@Venicegov.com>

**Subject:** Re: Deny Request for Fire Protection Special Assessment

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Eudy,

On behalf of Venice City Council, thank you for your comments. As your original email went to the Board of County Commissioners, I took the liberty of copying Venice City Council so that they were aware of your comments. I also copied the City Finance Director so that she would be able to verify your figures.

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

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

**Sent:** Tuesday, August 1, 2017 10:02 AM

**To:** John Holic

**Cc:** Al Maio; Charles D. Hines; [mmoran@scgov.net](mailto:mmoran@scgov.net); [ncdetert@scgov.net](mailto:ncdetert@scgov.net); Paul Caragiulo

**Subject:** Deny Request for Fire Protection Special Assessment

August 1, 2017

TO: Mayor Holic and City Council

RE: Deny Request for *Fire Protection Special Assessment* by definition 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.

Regards,  
Kim and Ken Eudy  
920 Cooper Street  
Venice, Florida

**From:** John Holic

**Sent:** Tuesday, August 01, 2017 2:49 PM

**To:** Frank Saletel <fle008@verizon.net>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>

**Cc:** Linda Senne <LSenne@Venicegov.com>; Edward Lavallee <ELavallee@Venicegov.com>

**Subject:** Re: Proposed City of Venice Fire Protection Special Assessment Fee/Tax

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Saletel,

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

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

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From: Frank Saletel <[fle008@verizon.net](mailto:fle008@verizon.net)>

Sent: Tuesday, August 1, 2017 11:40 AM

Subject: Proposed City of Venice Fire Protection Special Assessment Fee/Tax

To: City Council <[citycouncil@venicegov.com](mailto:citycouncil@venicegov.com)>

August 1, 2017

To the City of Venice Mayor and Council

We recently received written notification about the new fire assessment/tax. As Venice City residents we are unalterably opposed to the application of this tax in the form of Fire Protection Special Assessments.

First of all we are astounded that once again according to information in the media an important infrastructure building in the City of Venice is under attack from rat infestation, a leaky roof, and mold infiltration. Is there a pattern of neglect permeating important infrastructure in Venice?

Growing up with a father who was a public servant, I value those that serve in the police and fire departments. Before any speculation is made on expanding city hall, the issue of the fire fighters well being in Fire House 1 in Venice should be addressed. Before extracting millions of dollars from the taxpayers of Venice, a definite plan of rehabbing, rebuilding, or totally replacing the firehouse should be formulated. By the way, building a new firehouse at the airport is not in the best interests of those that live on Venice Island.

The methodology proposed for the calculation of the new fees is unfair to owners of townhouses and condominiums. The way the fee is calculated for condominiums is different than the way the fee is calculated for a single family home. The proposed fee structure unfairly burdens owners of townhouses and condominiums.

As a townhouse condominium owner I will be assessed the Tier 1 and Tier 2 fee. Although it states on my Sarasota County Property Records that my land value is \$0; it has been \$0 for tax year 2016, and 2017, why am I being assessed \$93.92 Tier 1 fee for land value of \$0? The county assessment combines the land value and structure value for condominiums into one value stated under Building.

If you own a single family home you are being given preferential treatment. The Tier1 fee remains the same no matter what the value of your land is assessed. The Tier 2 fee is based on the value of the

structure. If you have owned a single family home for several years your assessed structure value has been going down, therefore the Tier 2 multiplier will be used on a lower number each year. Not so for the condominium owner, whose increasing land value is in the building assessment and will be going up. My building assessment went up \$17,200 since last year, 2016. If you randomly select single family homes in Venice you will see that the land value for homes has increased since 2013 while their corresponding structure value has decreased.

Every year insurance companies provide insurance to condominium owners based on the structures on the properties. It's unfortunate that the city's consultant found it too challenging to come up with a formula to fairly charge both homeowners and condominium owners. By selecting an overly simplified calculation the city disadvantages the condominium type owners.

Also the newer structures are being over charged, because they have higher assessed valuations, even though they are more fire resilient than older structures. Our condominium includes a fire detection system and alarms installed according to the latest building codes. We paid for these fire safety items when we purchased the condominiums. Additionally we have annual fire inspections by our sprinkler company and the Fire Marshall that other residential structures do not. How is this reflected in our proposed fee/tax?

Condominiums and town home condominiums have fire regulations that must be adhered to. Are single family homes held to this stringent practice? My townhouse has a sprinkler system, smoke and fire alarms, a fire extinguisher, and a whole building fire alarm. My unit is inspected twice a year for fire safety by our sprinkler company and the Fire Marshall at a cost that I must pay as an association owner. The equipment installed in our condominium to provide early detection of fire increases safety and decreases property damages. So why are condominiums fire fees proportionately higher, when they are inherently safer?

The fire inspection fee the city of Venice charges us is based on the square footage of our townhouse. But the city consultant said that my land value could not be separated from the structure value. On my Sarasota County tax bill for my Land Condominium townhouse the square footage for the land is listed separately from my structure square footage. So a calculation could be made to decrease the Tier 2 fee for our condominium based on land value.

Finally, we ask who on the Venice City Council represents the many condominium unit owners? Is the mayor or any of the council members condominium owners? Who will speak for the condominium owners?

Frank Saletel

Linda Saletel  
453 Nokomis Ave So  
Venice Fl. 34285



**From:** John Holic

**Sent:** Tuesday, August 01, 2017 2:56 PM

**To:** Robert Enloe <[benloe3954@gmail.com](mailto:benloe3954@gmail.com)>; City Council <[CityCouncil@Venicegov.com](mailto:CityCouncil@Venicegov.com)>

**Subject:** Re: Fire district assessment

Dear Mr. Enloe,

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

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

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**From:** Robert Enloe <[benloe3954@gmail.com](mailto:benloe3954@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, August 1, 2017 9:49:20 AM

**To:** City Council

**Subject:** Fire district assessment

Are we now paying the Sarasota County also? City is asking to much.

Robert Enloe

**From:** John Holic

**Sent:** Tuesday, August 01, 2017 2:55 PM

**To:** R Lauer <rlauer2000@gmail.com>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>

**Cc:** Linda Senne <LSenne@Venicegov.com>; Edward Lavallee <ELavallee@Venicegov.com>

**Subject:** Re: Fire Assessment proposal

Dear Mr. Lauer and Ms. Caron,

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

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

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From: R Lauer <[rlauer2000@gmail.com](mailto:rlauer2000@gmail.com)>

Sent: Tuesday, August 1, 2017 10:43 AM

Subject: Re: Fire Assessment proposal

To: City Council <[citycouncil@venicegov.com](mailto:citycouncil@venicegov.com)>

On Tue, Aug 1, 2017 at 12:33 PM, R Lauer <[rlauer2000@gmail.com](mailto:rlauer2000@gmail.com)> wrote:

Dear Venice City Council,

August 01, 2017

We are opposed to your proposal for the Fire Assessment Program as it is a huge burden to the people who live within the City of Venice and who also must pick up the tab for those are exempt yet get the services. The Tax will be a negative impact and, stun property values here in the City. Fixed Income households are being hit hard and this will only burden us to the max.

The City already has:

1. 1% sales tax, not one cent but 1%.
2. Water service Readiness tax.
3. Previous Bond - Debt
4. Venice City Tax.

5. The New Bond Debt "Public Safety" 2016.
6. Building Permit fees + add on taxes.
7. Utility Fees and taxes.
8. Cable Taxes.
9. AND ON AND ON.

This Fire Department is already in our taxes for the city and the above Bonds and in the 7% sales taxes. This is a Sink Hole that continues to get larger as money is dumped into extravagant Lions and Women with pots on their shoulders. Stop the wasteful spending and we will have way more than enough to cover costs.

God Bless.

Richard Lauer & Judith Caron

Apalachicola Rd

Venice, Fl

**From:** John Holic

**Sent:** Tuesday, August 01, 2017 7:59 PM

**To:** Mary Gibson <marygibson58@gmail.com>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>

**Cc:** Edward Lavallee <ELavallee@Venicegov.com>; Linda Senne <LSenne@Venicegov.com>

**Subject:** Re: Objection to proposed special fire assessment

Dear Mr. And Mrs. Gibson,

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

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

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**From:** Mary Gibson <[marygibson58@gmail.com](mailto:marygibson58@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, August 1, 2017 2:09:53 PM

**To:** City Council

**Subject:** Objection to proposed special fire assessment

Mayor Holic and City of Venice Council members,

Please be advised that we oppose the proposed special assessment to fund City fire services. We are unable to attend the City Council meeting on August 21st but want to provide you with our thoughts on this matter.

Although we regularly read all information sent out by the City, such as email newsletters, we were very surprised to read the information sent in your recent mailing. We fully support Chief Carvey and the VFD staff in the excellent job they do, however this proposed assessment (in our case, \$276.70 for FY2018 and \$553.78 annually for successive years) is excessive and extreme. We voted in a previous election to keep City fire services under City management rather than transferring them to County oversight as we felt that the City would be better able to provide and manage these services. However had we known at that time that this very substantial special assessment was under consideration, we would have voted to have the County manage the VFD as apparently the City is incapable of funding the department.

As property owners in Venice, we already pay taxes that should be used to manage all City departments. If this special assessment for the VFD is approved, what other City departments will you establish new special assessments for--the VPD? Schools? City parks? The list could be endless.

We strongly request that you reconsider this plan. Thank you,

Mary and Gary Gibson  
230 Santa Maria St #130  
Venice

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** John Holic  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 02, 2017 9:49 AM  
**To:** Michael Stawecki <mikestawecki@gmail.com>  
**Cc:** City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>  
**Subject:** Re: Deny Request for Fire Protection Special Assessment

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

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**From:** Michael Stawecki <mikestawecki@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 2, 2017 6:52:08 AM  
**To:** John Holic  
**Subject:** Deny Request for Fire Protection Special Assessment

Mr. Mayor,

My wife 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,

Marilyn and Michael Stawecki

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:** Wednesday, August 02, 2017 9:47 AM

**To:** Richard Herrema <rjherrema@yahoo.com>

**Cc:** mmoran@scgov.net; ncdetert@scgov.net; amaio@scgov.net; chines@scgov.net; pcaragiulo@scgov.net; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>; Edward Lavallee <ELavallee@Venicegov.com>

**Subject:** Re: Modify Request for Fire Protection Special Assessment to be fair to condo owners

Dear Mr. Herrema and Ms. Neubacher,

Your original message was directed to the Board of County Commissioners, I have copied it to Venice City Council and thank you for your comments.

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

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From: Richard Herrema <[rjherrema@yahoo.com](mailto:rjherrema@yahoo.com)>

Sent: Wednesday, August 2, 2017 7:06 AM

Subject: Modify Request for Fire Protection Special Assessment to be fair to condo owners

To: John Holic <[jholic@venicegov.com](mailto:jholic@venicegov.com)>

Cc: <[mmoran@scgov.net](mailto:mmoran@scgov.net)>, <[ncdetert@scgov.net](mailto:ncdetert@scgov.net)>, <[amaio@scgov.net](mailto:amaio@scgov.net)>, <[chines@scgov.net](mailto:chines@scgov.net)>, <[pcaragiulo@scgov.net](mailto:pcaragiulo@scgov.net)>

August 2, 2017

TO: Mayor Holic and City Council

RE: Modify Request for *Fire Protection Special Assessment* by definition of  
“*Structural*” and “*Taxable Value*” [*Proposed Ordinance 2017-23*]

Dear Mayor,

The proposed *Fire Protection Special Assessments* suggests a **52% increase** with a future blank-check, without further discussion or approval agreement to raise it. This proposal should be modified for the following reasons:

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

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.

Regards,  
Richard Herrema and Pamela Neubacher  
920 Cooper Street Unit 301  
Venice, Florida

**From:** John Holic

**Sent:** Tuesday, August 01, 2017 10:38 PM

**To:** Don Robinson <donr@aes-inc.com>

**Cc:** amaio@scgov.net; chines@scgov.net; mmoran@scgov.net; ncdetert@scgov.net; pcaragiulo@scgov.net; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>; Edward Lavallee <ELavallee@Venicegov.com>; Linda Senne <LSenne@Venicegov.com>; islandparkfl@yourcommunitybulletins.com

**Subject:** Re: Recommendation to Deny Request for Fire Protection Special Assessment based on "Structural" and "Taxable Value" [Proposed Ordinance 2017-23]

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Robinson,

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

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

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**From:** Don Robinson <[DonR@aes-inc.com](mailto:DonR@aes-inc.com)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, August 1, 2017 7:13:08 PM

**To:** John Holic

**Cc:** [amaio@scgov.net](mailto:amaio@scgov.net); [chines@scgov.net](mailto:chines@scgov.net); [mmoran@scgov.net](mailto:mmoran@scgov.net); [ncdetert@scgov.net](mailto:ncdetert@scgov.net); [pcaragiulo@scgov.net](mailto:pcaragiulo@scgov.net); City Council; Edward Lavallee; Linda Senne; [islandparkfl@yourcommunitybulletins.com](mailto:islandparkfl@yourcommunitybulletins.com)

**Subject:** Recommendation to Deny Request for Fire Protection Special Assessment based on "Structural" and "Taxable Value" [Proposed Ordinance 2017-23]

**To:** Mayor Holic and members of City Council,

As an out-of-town Condo owner, we are unable to be present at the public hearing currently scheduled for Monday, August 21, 2017.

It would be fairer if the hearing was scheduled for mid to late January, 2018 when a considerably larger proportion of Condo owners are in town.

We recognize that costs increase with time and therefore the need for the City to periodically adjust the assessments/taxes for schools, stormwater management, parks, maintenance of roads, public works etc., including an appropriate fire protection service.

- However, based on our review of the letter issued, the proposed *Fire Protection Special Assessment* suggests an immediate **52% increase** with a future blank-check for further increases, i.e. without any defined mechanism or opportunity for discussion or approval by members of the public.
- To propose implementation of these tax changes as a suitable mechanism is unfair, particularly to seniors and also to out-of-town Condo residents.

**Why is it unfair?**

1. The special assessment is based on "*structure value*" not "*taxable value*".
2. Condo owners are assessed on all valuation as opposed to that for a single family home; their taxes are determined by property and structure values.
3. City consultants cannot reasonably 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 would be charged the Tier 1 fee based on having an "address"; the Tier 2 multiplier would be 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. It is not clear how or why use of the structure value establishes 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 would also note that a considerable proportion of Florida Condo owners are part-time residents and therefore already pay a disproportionately higher portion of the state and town taxes because:

- We are taxed at the same rates as full-time owners even though we make no use of some facilities (e.g. schools)
- We make only part-time use of many facilities e.g. parks, libraries
- And further, those from out of state are charged a higher rate as they are not classed as Homestead.

The passage of the proposed Special Assessment for Fire Protection will only further amplify an already unfair taxing system that is unfair to Florida Condo owners, particularly those that are part-time residents.

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

Respectfully,

Don and Pauline Robinson  
Unit 201, Island Park,  
920 Cooper Street, Venice, Florida

**From:** John Holic  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 01, 2017 8:53 PM  
**To:** paulganzenmuller@sbcglobal.net  
**Cc:** City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>  
**Subject:** Re: Deny Request for Fire Protection Special Assessment

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

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From: [paulganzenmuller@sbcglobal.net](mailto:paulganzenmuller@sbcglobal.net)  
Sent: Tuesday, August 1, 2017 6:43 PM  
Subject: RE: Deny Request for Fire Protection Special Assessment  
To: John Holic <[jholic@venicegov.com](mailto:jholic@venicegov.com)>

I am a homeowner in the Island Park condos on the island and have been for nearly 10 years now. I respectfully request that the proposed ordinance be revisited and revised to include a more equitable solution for the residents and fire district of Venice, Florida. I find such an increase in a mandatory service unacceptable.

We trust the price of property and resale value in our Venice investment would increase, along with our assessments/taxes for good schools, storm water 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.
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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.**

Thank you for your consideration,

Paul and Toni Ganzenmuller  
960 Cooper St.  
Unit 303  
Venice FL 34285

Jon B Wampler  
104 Plum Ridge Way  
Sellersburg, IN 47172

July 28, 2017

Re: Fire Protection Special Assessment

DISTRIBUTED:  
✓ Mayor/Council  
✓ City Clerk  
\_\_\_\_ City Manager  
\_\_\_\_ Staff

Dear Council,

I am writing to express my concern and objection to the proposed fire protection special assessments. While I agree that provision of fire protection is essential, I am concerned that it has been adequately funded until now, and suddenly, the Council and Financial Office have determined that it is or has been severely underfunded and now warrants very significant and ongoing and ever increasing assessments.

We are told by doing so, it frees other money up for the Council to spend on "other projects". Instead, why isn't the council proposing funding for those other projects, instead of concealing their funding under the guise of fire protection?

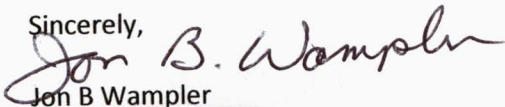
The structure of the program is unacceptable because it has no limits. The resulting high dollar impacts of those assessments are also unacceptable. A small incremental increase to the ad-valorem tax rate would make fare more sense, and would, of course, significantly reduce revenues you are trying to raise. But a 10% to 25% increase to annual real estate taxes is not the acceptable.

Nowhere in the letter does it cite that the money will be used to obtain or replace aging equipment, upgrade or supplement a fire protection infrastructure or staff that is deficient, obsolete, under staffed or under trained.

This is simply a guise to free up money for other "hidden" projects at tax-payer expense.

I urge the Council to vote "no".

Sincerely,



Jon B Wampler

Property Owner: 602 Tyson Terrace, Venice FL 34285

820 Capri Isles Blvd  
102  
Venice, FL 34292  
July 27, 2017

City Council  
City of Venice  
401 West Venice Ave.  
Venice, FL 34285

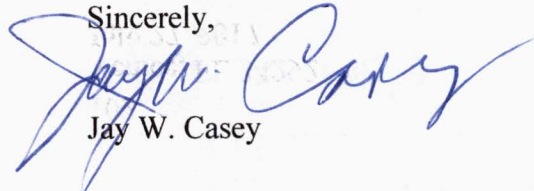
DISTRIBUTED:  
☒ Mayor/Council  
☒ City Clerk  
☐ City Manager  
☐ Staff

Dear Council members,

I am totally against a special assessment to cover fire department services. These costs should be covered in the taxes raised by the millage rate. If the rate is too low, raise it to cover these costs. Special assessments are a Pandora's box. What would be next, police department costs, DPW, city employees, pension shortfalls? Revenue should be raised as part of real estate taxes to cover all city costs, not through special assessments.

Most special assessments are the result of poor planning and execution. Perhaps we need a new city council that can better manage fiscal concerns.

Sincerely,



Jay W. Casey

July 27, 2017

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

DISTRIBUTED:  
✓ Mayor/Council  
✓ City Clerk  
\_\_\_\_ City Manager  
\_\_\_\_ Staff

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. I did call and talked to the Controller of Venice and he did indicate he too would pass on my concerns.

My taxes are \$800+ a year so this assessment seems out of line with that since in future years it will 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 condo's generally have a one time life span not an ongoing undetermined life span which could increase as time goes on.

My 95 year old mother also lives in this complex and lives on a fixed income as many of us do. She is not the only elderly person living here either. 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 awful big increase from 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  
Ann Potter (unit 229) and my mother ( unit 205)






July 27, 2017

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

DISTRIBUTED:  
✓ Mayor/Council  
✓ City Clerk  
\_\_\_\_ City Manager  
\_\_\_\_ Staff

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

Randy Snyder  
Jeannette Snyder  
#209



**From:** John Holic

**Sent:** Monday, July 31, 2017 1:25 PM

**To:** Ron Mendelson <mendyr9@gmail.com>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>

**Cc:** Edward Lavallee <ELavallee@Venicegov.com>

**Subject:** Re: Fire Protection Assessment

Dear Unsigned,

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

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

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**From:** Ron Mendelson <[mendyr9@gmail.com](mailto:mendyr9@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Monday, July 31, 2017 11:15:39 AM

**To:** City Council

**Subject:** Fire Protection Assessment

This proposal is an outrage. My estimate is it is an immediate tax increase of 10% and up to 20% permanently. Why has the fire department not been funded properly to date that would make such a large increase necessary? Why are funds like the sales tax not being directed to help fund the fire department? What is being done to reduce the costs of fire protection? the town appears happy to approve every new development that will put further burden on town facilities. What development charges are being assessed to these new developments to offset the increase in costs they create?

The hearing should be rescheduled to a time when most residents are in residence. Scheduling the hearing in August when there is a major portion of the city population not in residence is cowardly. It could be interpreted as an intentional attempt to limit input.

**From:** nfishw@aol.com [mailto:nfishw@aol.com]

**Sent:** Monday, July 31, 2017 1:13 PM

**To:** City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>

**Subject:** Imposition of Fire Fees

The attached letter is a copy of the hard copy I'm sending via regular mail. The gist of it is that your proposed fire fee (assessment) will have a net affect of not only increasing what Venice taxpayers provide now but also taking away the deductible nature we benefit from paying our fire fees as part of the present ad valorem tax. The net affect after FY 2018 will cause an approximately 50% increase in the amount of money we're paying now and will take away deductibility of this big increase.

8 Gulf Manor Drive  
Venice, Florida 34285  
July 31, 2017

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

Subject: Imposition of Fire Assessments

Dear Mayor and City Council:

I recently received a notice of a public hearing to be held August 21, 2017 to receive public comment of the proposed special assessments. The example used for calculating the fire assessments was based on a \$65,000 parcel. Noting that is an unusually low value that doesn't represent the average value of homes in this city, I used my 2016 tax valuation to see what this proposal will cost me. My additional costs for the FY 2018 rate will be \$454.67 versus \$187.17 savings on the proposed 3.1 mil ad valorem tax or \$267.50 more than last year. Calculating the FY 2019 proposed rate, fire fees will be \$910.09 versus \$187.17 savings on a proposed 3.1 mil ad valorem tax or a net additional cost of \$722.92. That represents a 50% increase in the present tax! I've also been informed by my CPA that I will no longer be able to write that cost off as a deductible as I have been doing because fire service was covered by ad valorem taxes and this proposed fire assessment is not deductible from my income tax.

With your passing two major bond issues and now this, I'm sure a lot of residents in Venice will be quite upset with this continuing rise in taxes caused by your recent actions. Please be more forthcoming at the August 21 meeting to insure that taxpaying residents really know the impact now before you carry out your intentions to adopt this fire fee. I have always supported our fire service but spare me the smoke and mirrors of using an unrealistic sample value to explain the consequences of your proposal and dodge the fact that a fire fee is not deductible from your income taxes.

Sincerely,

Nancy K. Woodley

**From:** John Holic

**Sent:** Monday, July 31, 2017 10:14 AM

**To:** Nancy Bradtmiller <nancyvenice@verizon.net>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>

**Subject:** Re: Fire Protection Special Assessments

Dear Mr. Bradtmiller,

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

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

---

**From:** Nancy Bradtmiller <[nancyvenice@verizon.net](mailto:nancyvenice@verizon.net)>

**Sent:** Monday, July 31, 2017 10:11:49 AM

**To:** City Council

**Subject:** Fire Protection Special Assessments

To: The Mayor and Members of the City Council

Re: City of Venice letter to property owners dated 20 July 2017

Your proposal, as set forth in the referenced letter, for establishing a supplemental dedicated funding source for fire protection services and facilities strikes me as essential and reasonable. The under funding of the Venice Fire Department has been dragged out too long.

The negative report on your initiative by the Venice Gondolier Sun on 29 July is disappointing. I see no place in this community for the whimpering and whining objections highlighted by the Gondolier.

Paul H. Bradtmiller  
835 Heron Cove Circle  
Venice, FL 34285-6155

**From:** John Holic

**Sent:** Friday, July 28, 2017 9:41 PM

**To:** Jane Carter <airportmanagement@yahoo.com>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>

**Subject:** Re: Fire Assessment

Dear Unsigned,

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

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

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**From:** Jane Carter <[airportmanagement@yahoo.com](mailto:airportmanagement@yahoo.com)>

**Sent:** Friday, July 28, 2017 9:38:15 AM

**To:** City Council; John Holic

**Subject:** Fire Assessment

My husband and I were very disturbed at the Fire Assessment letter that we received.

Even though it is apparent that something must be implemented in order to support the Venice Fire Services, the drastic amounts are in need of review.

Maybe now that the residents understand the impact of cost to them, another ballot item during the November election for consolidation with Sarasota county Fire is in order.

We can understand and agree to an increase in taxes (and this is a tax) of \$300 per year but when I read that we will be TAXED \$800 a year that is unacceptable. If this goes through at this current rate, we will seriously consider leaving Venice. This is not a responsible representation by the council and the mayor. I can only hope that there are full time citizens willing to run against the current mayor and council in order to replace those of you who think this is an acceptable burden to the taxpayers.

**From:** John Holic  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 30, 2017 12:06 PM  
**To:** Ralph Ferraro <rferraro0276@gmail.com>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>  
**Cc:** Edward Lavallee <ELavallee@Venicegov.com>  
**Subject:** Re: Fire Protection Special Assessments

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

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From: Ralph Ferraro <[rferraro0276@gmail.com](mailto:rferraro0276@gmail.com)>  
Sent: Sunday, July 30, 2017 9:52 AM  
Subject: Fire Protection Special Assessments  
To: City Council <[citycouncil@venicegov.com](mailto:citycouncil@venicegov.com)>

7/30/2017

TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS OF THE CITY OF VENICE

We are writing you in response to a notification we received regarding the proposed Fire Protection Special Assessments.

The notice states that this proposed Assessment is an imposition, that is being kind, it is far beyond an 'imposition'.

The populous of the City of Venice has an average age of 67, meaning half the population is 67 or older and more than likely on a fixed income. These are people that have worked hard all their lives, scrimped together a savings, and budgeted their monies in order to maintain a viable lifestyle during their retirement years.

The 'Imposition' of this proposed tax shows a lack of both planning and fiscal responsibility, more than likely results of uncontrolled growth.

We are vehemently opposed to the implementation of this 'Fire Protection Special Assessment'.

The good people of Venice have worked hard to save and budget their money to live within their means, the City of Venice should do the same.

We strongly urge you to abandon this proposal and redirect your efforts to find the funds you need without raising taxes or fees.

RESPECTFULLY



RALPH AND NANCY FERRARO  
1211 CAPRI ISLES BLVD #20  
VENICE, FLORIDA 34292  
Parcel NO. 0401111020

**From:** Linda Senne

**Sent:** Monday, July 31, 2017 12:02 PM

**To:** Anthony Pizone <avplmp9@gmail.com>

**Cc:** Robert Daniels <RDaniels@Venicegov.com>; Edward Lavallee <ELavallee@Venicegov.com>; George Alexander <gwa44@aol.com>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>; John Milne Florida <milnjd@aol.com>; Joan Sass <jpsrts@msn.com>; Joe Welch <JWelch@Venicegov.com>; Anthony Pizone <avplmp9@gmail.com>

**Subject:** RE: Bay Indies Fire Fee Response

Tony,

You're welcome and have a great day.

**From:** ANTHONY PINZONE [<mailto:avplmp9@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Monday, July 31, 2017 11:59 AM

**To:** Linda Senne <[LSenne@Venicegov.com](mailto:LSenne@Venicegov.com)>

**Cc:** Robert Daniels <[RDaniels@Venicegov.com](mailto:RDaniels@Venicegov.com)>; Edward Lavallee <[ELavallee@Venicegov.com](mailto:ELavallee@Venicegov.com)>; George Alexander <[gwa44@aol.com](mailto:gwa44@aol.com)>; City Council <[CityCouncil@Venicegov.com](mailto:CityCouncil@Venicegov.com)>; John Milne Florida <[milnjd@aol.com](mailto:milnjd@aol.com)>; Joan Sass <[jpsrts@msn.com](mailto:jpsrts@msn.com)>; Joe Welch <[JWelch@Venicegov.com](mailto:JWelch@Venicegov.com)>; Anthony Pizone <[avplmp9@gmail.com](mailto:avplmp9@gmail.com)>

**Subject:** Re: Bay Indies Fire Fee Response

Linda,

Thank you very much for your response. The park owners have always paid their taxes in November to take advantage of the 4% discount. Our Rental Agreement requires the park owners to pass-on taxes based upon 1309 home sites. That is why I assumed the revised factors in my calculations.

I truly appreciate your verification of my revised calculations as being accurate. You have been a **GREAT** help to us in Bay Indies.

Again, than k you very much.

*Tony*

*Anthony V. Pinzone*

[avplmp9@gmail.com](mailto:avplmp9@gmail.com)

On Mon, Jul 31, 2017 at 11:43 AM, Linda Senne <[LSenne@venicegov.com](mailto:LSenne@venicegov.com)> wrote:

Good Morning Tony,

Your 3 calculations for the Venice Operating and Venice Debt to arrive at the 3 totals tie to my letter to you dated 7/19/2017. The calculations to arrive at the net with the 96% early tax payment also are correct; however I don't know when MHC Bay Indies LLC actually pays the taxes. You are assuming they pay in November to get the 4% discount.

My letter used the 2,860 manufactured home sites in Bay Indies. Your calculations are using the 1,309 total living units. I don't know if the owner uses the 2,860 home sites or the 1,309 living units for how they distribute taxes to the residents in Bay Indies. If the 1,309 living units is the number the owner uses then your calculations are correct.

Thanks

Linda

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **ANTHONY PINZONE** <[avplmp9@gmail.com](mailto:avplmp9@gmail.com)>

Date: Sun, Jul 30, 2017 at 10:45 AM

Subject: Re: Bay Indies Fire Fee Response

To: Robert Daniels <[RDaniels@venicegov.com](mailto:RDaniels@venicegov.com)>

Cc: Edward Lavalley <[ELavalley@venicegov.com](mailto:ELavalley@venicegov.com)>, Linda Senne <[LSenne@venicegov.com](mailto:LSenne@venicegov.com)>, Bay Indies George Alexander <[gwa44@aol.com](mailto:gwa44@aol.com)>, "Bay Indies HOA President John S. Milne" <[milnjd@aol.com](mailto:milnjd@aol.com)>, Joan Sass <[jpsrts@msn.com](mailto:jpsrts@msn.com)>

July 30, 2017

Bob and Ed,

Yes, I did receive Linda's first letter dated July 19th. That is the response that Ed is referring too. As a result of the July 19th letter, I prepared my second email that you, Ed, Linda and others received (copy attached). My second email was dated July 20th and reflected my recalculations of the estimated tax impact of the Fire Tax Assessment at 50% implementation with the .5 reduction in the millage rate. I asked if Linda would check my calculations for accuracy and get back to me. I have not received the second email or letter from Linda following her evaluation of my calculations. We have not distributed the recalculations to the residents of Bay Indies or to the HOA as of this date and are awaiting Linda's check of my calculations.

Thanks for your continued assistance.

Tony

Anthony V. Pinzone  
[avplmp9@gmail.com](mailto:avplmp9@gmail.com)

ANTHONY PINZONE <[avplmp9@gmail.com](mailto:avplmp9@gmail.com)> 20 (10 days ago)

to **Linda, Edward, City, Joan,** Robert, Bay, George

July 20, 2017

Linda,

Thank you very much for your letter dated July 19, 2017 explaining the estimated property tax assessments for 2017 for the City with and without the passage of the Fire Tax Assessments at the 50% level of implementation.

The following reflects my calculations based upon your figures with my modifications:

2016 Venice Operating Budget	\$204,221.16
2016 Venice Debt Budget	<u>\$ 9,416.68</u>
2016 Total	\$213,638.02
	<u>          x 96%</u> early tax
payment	\$205,092.50
	\$ 156.68 divided by
1309 home sites--yearly	
	\$ 13.06 divided by
12 months--per home site	
2017 Venice Operating Budget	
\$221,076.00 <b>without</b> Fire Tax Assessment	
2017 Venice Debt Budget	<u>\$</u>
<u>41,635.98</u> <b>without</b> Fire Tax Assessment	
2017 Total	\$262,711.98 <b>without</b> Fire
Tax Assessment	
	<u>          x 96%</u> early tax
payment	\$252,203.50
	\$ 192.67 divided by
1309 home sites	
	\$ 16.06 divided by 12
months--per home site	
	\$ 192.67 2017 Yearly
Total	
	<u>\$ 156.68</u> 2016 Yearly
Total	



	\$ 35.99 increase
or <b>23%</b> over 2017	
2017 Venice Operating Budget	\$190,371.00 <b>with</b> Fire
Tax Assessment--50%	
2017 Venice Debt Budget	\$ 41,635.98 <b>with</b> Fire
Tax Assessment--50%	
2017 Fire Tax Assessment	\$ <u>1,743.75</u> <b>with</b> Fire Tax
Assessment--50%	
2017 Total	\$233,750.73 <b>with</b> Fire
Tax Assessment--50%	
	<u>          </u> x 96% early tax
payment	\$224,400.70
	\$ 171.43 divided by
1309 home sites	
	\$ 14.29 divided by 12
months--per home site	
	\$ 171.43 2017 Yearly
Total	
	\$ <u>156.68</u> 2016 Yearly
Total	
	\$ 14.75 increase
or <b>9.4%</b> over 2016	

If my math is correct, the residents of Bay Indies are better off with the Fire Tax Assessment at 50% implementation with the .5 reduction in the millage rate.

Linda, please, at your earliest convenience check my calculations for accuracy. Once verified by you or your staff, we will share them with our residents.

Again, thank you very much for your continued assistance.

Tony  
Anthony V. Pinzone  
[avplmp9@gmail.com](mailto:avplmp9@gmail.com)

8:07 AM (2 hours ago)

**Robert Daniels**

to Edward, me, me, Linda, Bay, Bay, Joan

Tony do you have what you requested?

On Sun, Jul 30, 2017 at 8:07 AM, Robert Daniels <[RDaniels@venicegov.com](mailto:RDaniels@venicegov.com)> wrote:

Tony do you have what you requested?

Regards,

Councilman Bob Daniels

City Of Venice , Florida

On Jul 30, 2017, at 4:49 AM, Edward Lavallee <[ELavallee@Venicegov.com](mailto:ELavallee@Venicegov.com)> wrote:

Bob

I was copied on a response that the Finance Department sent to Tony last week and he responded back that he received it. He also indicated that he would review it and may have additional comments or questions. I will ask Finance to copy you on the response they sent to Tony

Edward F. Lavallee

On Jul 29, 2017, at 1:18 PM, ANTHONY PINZONE <[avplmp9@gmail.com](mailto:avplmp9@gmail.com)> wrote:

Bob

Again, thank you

Tony

On Sat, Jul 29, 2017 at 1:16 PM Robert Daniels <[RDaniels@venicegov.com](mailto:RDaniels@venicegov.com)> wrote:

Ed, Tony sent in a request to review his numbers for Bay Indies a week ago. He has not received our response?

When can he get it for communications to the Bay Indies residents?

Regards,

Councilman Bob Daniels

City Of Venice , Florida

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--

*Tony*

*Anthony V. Pinzone*  
[avplmp9@gmail.com](mailto:avplmp9@gmail.com)

**From:** Jerry Jasper [mailto:jjaspernc@gmail.com]

**Sent:** Saturday, July 29, 2017 10:03 AM

**To:** Linda Senne <LSenne@Venicegov.com>

**Cc:** City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>; Edward Lavalley <ELavalley@Venicegov.com>; Lori Stelzer <LStelzer@Venicegov.com>; Joe Welch <JWelch@Venicegov.com>

**Subject:** Re: Fire Protection Assessment Fee

Linda,

Thanks for the prompt response and confirmation that my stated amounts are correct.

With a \$4.2 million Fire Services Fund ( actually a \$4.6 million Assessment to accommodate early payment, county and notice fees) compared to a \$ 1.8 million General Fund reduction, it becomes quite obvious a "tax burden neutral" situation for the individual property owner, even considering the Fire Assessment will be imposed on certain properties that are property tax exempt, is not possible.

The additional revenues required (\$2.4million) as a percentage of the funds generated by the Fire Assessment (\$4.2 million) is 57%. Using my particular property, the net increase in total payments (\$243.98) as a percentage of my Fire Assessment (\$382.52) is 64%. One would expect the 64% would be something less than the 57% but considering all the differing parameters involved, the percentage comparison is actually quite close.

Linda, again thanks for the explanation and what I believe to be a confirmation that the typical owner of a developed residential property cannot expect any thing close to a "tax burden neutral" position with a 50% recovery Fire Assessment Fee and 0.5 millage reduction in City property taxes.

Regarding the federal income tax deductibility, I can see where possibly a portion of Assessment MIGHT be considered federal income tax deductible. Realizing the City does not want to take a position on deductibility, is there any way you can share your research on this with the public?

Jerry

On Fri, Jul 28, 2017 at 5:48 PM, Linda Senne <[LSenne@venicegov.com](mailto:LSenne@venicegov.com)> wrote:

Hi Mr. Jasper,

Your amounts are correct as stated in your email below.

The fire assessment is not revenue neutral or “tax burden neutral” as explained in Q #4 of the City’s FAQ. The Fee is expected to generate \$4,210,000 for the Fire Services Fund. The .50 millage rate reduction will cost the City’s General Fund approximately \$1.8 million. As explained in Q #2 of the FAQ, the additional revenues (\$2.4 million) are needed to fund fire department capital/replacement, and free up general fund and one cent sales tax fund revenues to be used for other purposes.

As far as if it’s tax deductible, our research showed it to be an area that has not been factually determined, and has arguments on both sides. This is the reason the City has determined to take the position that individuals should consult their tax advisors.

Have a wonderful week-end.

Linda

**From:** Jerry Jasper [mailto:[jjaspernc@gmail.com](mailto:jjaspernc@gmail.com)]

**Sent:** Friday, July 28, 2017 7:56 AM

**To:** Linda Senne <[LSenne@Venicegov.com](mailto:LSenne@Venicegov.com)>

**Cc:** City Council <[CityCouncil@Venicegov.com](mailto:CityCouncil@Venicegov.com)>; Edward Lavallee <[ELavallee@Venicegov.com](mailto:ELavallee@Venicegov.com)>; Lori Stelzer <[LStelzer@Venicegov.com](mailto:LStelzer@Venicegov.com)>

**Subject:** Fwd: Fire Protection Assessment Fee

Linda,

As Mayor Holic has requested in his email below, I am asking if you could verify the amounts stated in my email to him. My Property Record information is:

Parcel No. 0373080690

130 Burano Ct

FY2018 Fire Fee Rate per July 20 Notice: \$382.52

2017 Taxable Value Per Appraiser's Website: \$277,673.00



Property Tax reduction at 0.5 mils:

138.84 (My Calculation)

As you can determine from the email exchange between the Mayor and me, the question is whether or not the Fee and offsetting property tax reduction at 0.5 mils is "tax burden neutral".

Thanks for any help you can provide in making this determination.

Jerry Jasper

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **John Holic** <[JHolic@venicegov.com](mailto:JHolic@venicegov.com)>

Date: Thu, Jul 27, 2017 at 11:32 PM

Subject: Re: Fire Protection Assessment Fee

To: Jerry Jasper <[jjasperne@gmail.com](mailto:jjasperne@gmail.com)>, City Council <[CityCouncil@venicegov.com](mailto:CityCouncil@venicegov.com)>

Cc: Lori Stelzer <[LStelzer@venicegov.com](mailto:LStelzer@venicegov.com)>, Edward Lavallee <[ELavallee@venicegov.com](mailto:ELavallee@venicegov.com)>, Linda Senne <

[LSenne@venicegov.com](mailto:LSenne@venicegov.com)>

Jerry,

Unfortunately, the figures you are looking at were not sent out before council break for the summer and I have not seen them nor am I in a place where I can just go and verify what anyone's figures are or will be. Please forward what you have to either Ed Lavallee or Linda Senne and they will be able to verify the figures.

Sorry, I can't do more than that from here.

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

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**From:** Jerry Jasper <[jjaspernc@gmail.com](mailto:jjaspernc@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 27, 2017 6:41:17 PM  
**To:** City Council  
**Cc:** Lori Stelzer  
**Subject:** Fire Protection Assessment Fee

Mayor Holic,

The purpose of this email is not to debate the pros and cons of the Fire Protection Assessment. When looking over the incoming emails on the City's public server, I find that's been amply covered. What does bewilder me, however, are the ongoing representations that the intent is that this Fire Fee be "tax burden neutral". Unless I am missing the boat completely, my calculations show this to be far from reality.

The City's July 20, 2017, Notice of Public Hearing letter states my 2018 FY Fire Protection Assessment will be \$382.52. It is my understanding that City Council is considering a reduction in the millage rate from 3.6 to 3.1, or 0.5 mils, to "offset" the Fire Protection Assessment. Based on the Sarasota County Tax Appraiser's 2017 numbers (on which the 2018 FY property taxes will be based), the taxable value of my home and property is \$277,673. Simple arithmetic shows a 0.5 mil decrease in that value amounts to a property tax reduction of \$138.84. A Fee of \$382.52 compared to a \$138.84 decrease in property taxes might be called a lot of things but certainly not "tax burden neutral".

Two possibilities exist that could explain this discrepancy. The first is that my assessed and taxable home and land values are anomalies and provide for a Fire Fee and property tax reduction calculations unlike those experienced by most all other City of Venice homeowners. The second explanation is that you and City Council were misled

as to the relationship of the Fee amount compared to a 0.5 mil property tax reduction. As I live in a community of over 1,300 homes that are all, within reasonable bounds, similar in nature, I can only assume that somewhere along the line, you and City Council was severely misled on the premise that this undertaking was "tax burden neutral". Assuming the comparison on my property is somewhat "typical"; hopefully, this misconception can be corrected.

I will add if I may, that even if the Fee amount was directly offset by an equal reduction in property taxes, I would lose a federal income tax deduction equivalent to that amount. I realize the City's advice is to "consult your tax account" but we all know that is simply code for "it's not deductible".

John, again, I am not taking a position here on the merits of having or not having a Fire Protection Assessment. I only ask that Venice homeowners be given the "true scoop" regarding the assertion that this endeavor is "tax burden neutral".

Thanks for your time.

Jerry Jasper

**From:** John Holic

**Sent:** Thursday, July 27, 2017 7:48 PM

**To:** greg murphy <greggome@yahoo.com>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>

**Subject:** Re: fire assessment

Dear Mr. And Mrs. Murphy,

On behalf of Venice City Council, thank you for your comments. Thank you also for your copy of the email, I will answer it with a copy of the response I sent to the originator.

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

Dear Mr. ,

On behalf of Venice City Council, thank you for your comments. The Fire Fee is designed to be tax burden neutral to the residential land owner, however, may need some tweaking in years 2 and 3. From your email, it doesn't sound like you wish to talk about it, but should that change, we will be happy to have a city representative talk with your group about how the Fire Fee works.

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

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**From:** greg murphy <[greggome@yahoo.com](mailto:greggome@yahoo.com)>

**Sent:** Thursday, July 27, 2017 5:08:49 PM

**To:** City Council

**Subject:** fire assessment

Dear Mayor Holic and City council Members,

While the letter below is not ours, it stated everything we would have said in an original letter. In short: WE STRONGLY OPPOSE THIS TAX INCREASE FOR THE FIRE PROTECTION SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS! How come as the population, and thus the tax base increases, the government always finds a reason to increase the taxes? We moved here from an area where we could no longer afford to live as the taxes and housing prices were too high. Now we find ourselves considering how we could ever afford to stay here in a few years when we retire.

To: Venice FL City Council and Mayor,

It is quite obvious that you are out of touch with the overwhelming push of the American people that want less intrusive government, smaller government and lower taxes.

It is incomprehensible that you must think the residents of Venice FL are that much different than the rest of the United States. I would even go further and state that those of us who are retired on fixed incomes ( and there are many of us ) are opposed to your proposal and I am sure your proposal will be an extremely significant financial burden on many

residents of Venice FL. I am appalled and ashamed to have city representative appear to be so far out of touch.

This is not a special assessment that most people relate to a onetime assessment but it is simply a huge tax increase that will continue forever, year after year. The full year FIRE PROTECTION ASSESSMENT represents a 69.77% increase over the two Venice City taxes that are on my annual property tax bill...this increase is outrageous!!! During my working days, if I went to my company's board of directors and suggested I needed an increase of 69% in corporate funds to sustain my business, besides being laughed at, I would be without a job. If the City of Venice needs an increase over the annual inflation rate to maintain its services then it is obvious that gross mismanagement has occurred and those involved should tender their resignation.

The mismanagement of the growth in the City of Venice rears its ugly consequences as a part of this FIRE PROTECTION SPECIAL ASSESSMENT. You as our City Council and Mayor have allowed the residential expansion to go out of control and allowing the additional infrastructure necessary to maintain this growth to go on the backs of the residents of our city. I am embarrassed to see this behavior by our City Leaders. If City Leaders feel the need to allow city expansion ( I would also suggest that most current city residents do not), then have the developers pony up the money to cover the additional infrastructure costs needed to service the new development...maybe development would slow down which would be a good thing.

I hope our City Leaders will reconsider this FIRE PROTECTION SPECIAL ASSESSMENT and become more sensitive to the tax burden of the current residents of Venice FL.

We would be very happy to vote against every one of you who continues this push for higher taxes instead of finding ways to eliminate government waste.

Lucille and Greg Murphy  
1239 Schooner Ln  
Venice FL 34285

**From:** John Holic

**Sent:** Thursday, July 27, 2017 7:35 PM

**To:** vanthofp2 <vanthofp2@comcast.net>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>

**Subject:** Re: Fire fee

Dear Unsigned,

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

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

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**From:** vanthofp2 <[vanthofp2@comcast.net](mailto:vanthofp2@comcast.net)>

**Sent:** Thursday, July 27, 2017 5:14:42 PM

**To:** City Council

**Subject:** Fire fee

If you implement it I can guarantee most of us will vote you out of office. The city has become a tax and spend city trying to make up for past stupid decisions and poor money management. Business 41 gets resurfaced and Venice Avenue looks and feels like roads and streets in Illinois and Michigan. The older citizens have had about enough of your decisions.

**From:** John Holic  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 27, 2017 3:22 PM  
**To:** John Luce <jtluce46@gmail.com>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>  
**Subject:** Re: Fire Protection Special Assessments

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

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**From:** John Luce <jtluce46@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 27, 2017 11:36:01 AM  
**To:** City Council  
**Subject:** Fire Protection Special Assessments

Dear Council Members:

I want to go on record that I strongly oppose this assessment. It is unnecessary and a burden on homeowners living in the City of Venice. Even if it was a good idea, and it isn't, why would you think it should be two tiered. Do you have some convincing evidence that it costs more to provide fire prevention to more expensive homes? Are you aware that according to national statistics house fires are down about 50% since 1980 in spite of a 42% increase in population. How does Venice compare with these numbers.

I am also very disappointed in your decision to address this issue at a Council meeting during the summer when many homeowners are not in town. If this wasn't intentional it sure gives the impression of something underhanded. Given the size of this assessment and in the interest of fairness it should be put to a vote of the taxpayers and not be decided by a City Council. In my particular case I am looking at a 15% increase in my taxes for fiscal 2019 and that assumes there are no other increases which is unlikely.

Regards,  
John Luce



**From:** John Holic  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 27, 2017 10:57 AM  
**To:** JoAnn Seagly <[rencounter@live.com](mailto:rencounter@live.com)>  
**Cc:** Lori Stelzer <[LStelzer@Venicegov.com](mailto:LStelzer@Venicegov.com)>; City Council <[CityCouncil@Venicegov.com](mailto:CityCouncil@Venicegov.com)>  
**Subject:** Re: Fire non-advalorem

Dear Ms. Seagly,

Thank you for your comments. Please take into account that if the fire fee is passed, there will be a reduction in ad valorem taxes that will offset some or all of the fire fee.

Sincerely,  
John Holic  
Mayor, City of Venice

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**From:** JoAnn Seagly <[rencounter@live.com](mailto:rencounter@live.com)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 27, 2017 8:24:43 AM  
**To:** John Holic  
**Subject:** Fire non-advalorem

Good morning,

I would like to express how unfair the proposed assessment is to your community. We live in Colonial Manor, a resident owned community, Bay Indies is next door a non-resident owned community. 3,000 plus units are located within and according to your office they will pay a flat parcel fee of \$93.92 to cover everything. There are 141 units in Colonial Manor and everyone of us will be charged the \$93.92 plus \$4.81 per \$5,000 in assessed value each year. Where is the parity? How can you justify the undo burden on all homeowners and give free rides to all the non-resident owned communities. Don't you offer service to all those individual units too? Please rethink what you are doing to your citizens. I believe it is a way for Venice to add to their coffers without input from their community. I believe your actions will be challenged. I believe this has not been well thought out.

Sincerely,

JoAnn Seagly

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** John Holic

**Sent:** Thursday, July 27, 2017 1:13 AM

**To:** Peter Simmons <pwsimmonsjr@verizon.net>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>

**Cc:** Bill & Mary Eftax <bill.eftax@gmail.com>; Ed & Sandy Gatterdam <gattlenn1@verizon.net>; Gerry Gaida <jgcopter@gmail.com>; Tom & Karen Bents <thomasbentz5@aol.com>; 'donna graham' <myquintin@verizon.net>; 'S Hizon' <susanhizon@gmail.com>; 'Abene' <jojoabene@aol.com>; 'Adams' <margandglenn@gmail.com>; 'Adams2' <athena47@comcast.net>; 'Albright' <richard2376@verizon.net>; 'Aley' <paley@woh.rr.com>; 'Altobelli' <aealtobelli@gmail.com>; 'Anderson' <marshcreekpad@aol.com>; 'Anderson/Puthoff' <aliceanderson03@aol.com>; 'Antine' <mlantine@yahoo.com>; 'Arbaugh' <edgarbaugh@gmail.com>; 'Arcano' <rjrkn@yahoo.com>; 'Argentine' <argentin@twcny.rr.com>; 'Aridgides' <saridgides@gmail.com>; 'Armock' <donarmock@aol.com>; 'Austin' <austin697@verizon.net>; 'Austin2' <waustin5@optimum.net>; 'bachand' <pegbachand@gmail.com>; 'Bade' <pbade@gmail.com>; 'Balducci' <balducci3@comcast.net>; 'Barnhart' <raybarnhart@comcast.net>; 'Barta' <lakemeade7@gmail.com>; 'Bartolucci' <jbart3196@gmail.com>; 'Basler' <baslerki@gmail.com>; 'Beadle' <maureen6545@hotmail.com>; 'Beall' <dbeall4@comcast.net>; 'Beatty' <jbeatty31@comcast.net>; 'Beaulieu' <ljbbeaulieu71@gmail.com>; 'Beharrell' <rbeharrell@comcast.net>; 'Beinner' <dbeiner@ptd.net>; 'Belding' <beldingj@hotmail.com>; 'Bell' <eaglestrace@aol.com>; 'Belsley' <ehbelsley@gmail.com>; 'Benge' <tldata22@aol.com>; 'Bennawy' <laurabennawy@gmail.com>; 'Bennett' <jimbennettlaw@earthlink.net>; 'Bergman' <raceleigh1@comcast.net>; 'Berlien' <cyrlbr@comcast.net>; 'Berlin' <joybirds@roadrunner.com>; 'Bertin' <cbertin@aol.com>; 'Berzinis' <janeberzinis@gmail.com>; 'Bezdziecki' <erb1957@comcast.net>; 'Biel' <kareb129@aol.com>; 'Black' <chb605@comcast.net>; 'Blazek' <bjblazek@gmail.com>; 'Bobby' <richbobby17@gmail.com>; 'Bohachewsky' <mmb10b2@yahoo.com>; 'Boltz' <dvpma@aol.com>; 'Border' <lorreneborder@gmail.com>; 'Boudreaux' <cared63@yahoo.com>; 'bouwma' <rdbouwma@aol.com>; 'Bowers' <pcbowers@verizon.net>; 'Boyer' <milrnfla@yahoo.com>; 'Boyle' <elboy821@verizon.net>; 'Bracy' <ebracy0928@gmail.com>; 'Bradley' <briscojim@gmail.com>; 'Bradley2' <drronbradley@yahoo.com>; 'Breitzig' <breitzig@verizon.net>; 'Brouckman' <jamesbrouckman@speakeasy.net>; 'Bryck' <rbryck@gmail.com>; 'Buchanan' <jennybuchanan99@hotmail.com>; 'Buck' <buckej@verizon.net>; 'Buitron' <rbuitron@mc.net>; 'Bumpus' <merilyncalvin@yahoo.com>; 'Bunce' <vbunce1@earthlink.net>; 'Burris' <jpburris2003@yahoo.com>; 'Burtoff' <bburtoff@comcast.net>; 'Fuhrmann' <detlef@immupure.com>; 'Tibaldi' <gbondtibaldi@gmail.com>; Edward Lavallee <ELavallee@Venicegov.com>

**Subject:** Re: Venice FL - PROPOSED FIRE PROTECTION SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS

Dear Mr. Simmons,

Thank you for your note, I do not intend to address these points in a response email as council has met for over 30 hours in 5 meetings so far to try to come up with a fair method of charging for the services the citizens of Venice demand. All these meetings were open to the public and input was solicited. This does not include the over 3 years of trying to see if consolidating the Venice fire service with the county would provide cost savings nor does it include the over \$30 million the current council has saved the taxpayers of the city in health care costs, the over \$20 million we have saved in the changes made in the Police and Fire Pension, nor the fact that the Police and Fire will now have a pension plan that they can rely on, not promises that cannot be paid for. Nor does it include the unpresidential change in the union contracts that provided raises for just being there, a change in the step pay system that is hard to calculate in savings but comes close to another \$25 million over the next 20 years.

You are free to criticize, but it would be far better to use facts instead of fiction. Your email reads like the fake news that is relayed to me off internet sites. I would strongly suggest you run for council and set things straight in your eyes rather than slinging mud.

Check the rationale of leaving the millage at 3.6 max and then look what happens after we have a chance to vote on the final tax rate. Unfortunately Government accounting and procedures leave a lot to be desired but most of that is brought on by people making accusations that are unfounded and inaccurate. Make them when the final figures are out if you wish, but also remember that I said that we have made a best faith effort and it will require tweaking in years 2 and 3.

Four of the current people on council took this city through the Great Recession without a tax increase and had a 30 % reduction in the city work force. Even now, with the city at it's best shape financially in years, we have not returned to pre Great Recession work force. We have made the budget process understandable and are attempting to make it transparent for all who take time to view it. No one, outside of a select few in government and very vigilant citizens, ever knew how much it cost to run a Fire Department. After the Fire Fee is finalized, we will have a transparent and understandable figure. I hope to do the same with the Police Department over the next couple of years. The Citizens have a right to know!

We have slowly moved from crisis management to a planned City. We will have a depreciation schedule for all equipment, the first time ever for the City. If you think that is a small move, then I feel sorry for you. Be informed, be involved but don't sit there and sling mud. If you really care for the City, work for it. Anyone can do Facebook or Twitter, few will do the daily work. Which side are you on?

I am currently on vacation but still have taken time to answer you, could you or would you do the same. If you are embarrassed by the current situation, then you should stand up and offer a change, but do so on facts, not made up fiction. Send me a copy of your thoughts when we were trying to consolidate the fire service; send me a copy of your thoughts when we modified the health insurance plan. Send me a copy of your thoughts when we changed the Fire and Police Pension Plans; send me a copy of your thoughts when we laid off or refused to hire replacements during the Great Recession. I am sure those thoughts will be good campaign material for you. I love good constructive criticism as that almost always brings about new ideas and potential solutions. I loath innuendo, fact less accusation and fake news as all it does is stir emotions and waste time instead of moving toward resolution.

I have probably said more than you wish to hear, but will leave you with a wish -- Good Luck in your quest for City Council, but remember, once your are on the other side, the number of shot takers increases exponentially. Many criticize, few will make the effort necessary to make effectual change. The current council was effective in approving less than 50% of the intensity and density in the growth areas of the city as previously approved by a "slow growth: council. Take a look at the numbers - the new developments could have been built out at 5 units per acre without the approval of the Planning Commission or City Council as that is what was approved by the previous council. I do not think the approved rate by the current council exceeds 2.5 units overall per acre in total. The fire assessment fee has nothing to do with the very moderate growth of Venice, rather it has everything to do with the long term neglect of some of our moist valuable assets, our Police and Fire Departments. We could have either fixed it now or kicked the proverbial can down the road and let some future council deal with it. Not dealing with issues is easy, just ask the previous council. If you wish to run for council in the near future, I am sure this council be persuaded to doing nothing and leaving the problem for you to resolve.

Sincerely,  
John Holic  
Mayor, City of Venice

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From: Peter Simmons <[pwsimmonsjr@verizon.net](mailto:pwsimmonsjr@verizon.net)>  
Sent: Wednesday, July 26, 2017 8:48 PM  
Subject: RE: Venice FL - PROPOSED FIRE PROTECTION SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS  
To: City Council <[citycouncil@venicegov.com](mailto:citycouncil@venicegov.com)>, John Holic <[jholic@venicegov.com](mailto:jholic@venicegov.com)>  
Cc: Bill & Mary Eftax <[bill.eftax@gmail.com](mailto:bill.eftax@gmail.com)>, Ed & Sandy Gatterdam  
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<[gbondtibaldi@gmail.com](mailto:gbondtibaldi@gmail.com)>

Dear Mr. Holic,

Please understand that I do not have a group, I only copied a few Venice friends and neighbors on my initial email to you and the council and for your review I have attached a few response that were sent back to me. Perhaps I missed the revenue neutral part

of the letter the city sent. I did see where the council **MAY** consider lowering the Venice City millage to 3.1 from 3.6 if the Fire Protection Assessment is adopted. Lowering the millage to 3.1 would lower my personal Venice City tax by about \$ 142.00 where the

Fire Protection Assessment will add about \$746.00 to my annual full year tax bill.....this is not revenue neutral in my opinion.

If your proposal was to be revenue neutral, then why did you not lead with this statement in the initial letter and specifically show how you plan to make it neutral. Although I do not want to have private group meeting for you to explain your proposal, I do feel the group you need to address is every Venice City resident so we can all understand the ambiguity of the information in your initial letter from the City Council and the response to me. For example, you mentioned revenue neutral for residential land owners, how about home owners... I can see where a tier 1 assessment for a land owner might be neutral **IF** the City Council lowers the millage to 3.1. Your letter also mentions if the FIRE PROTECTION ASSESSMENT is not adopted the Council will consider a Venice City millage of 3.6, I believe the millage is already at 3.6. And finally if this FIRE PROTECTION ASSESSMENT is to be revenue neutral then why to anything?

Sincerely,

Pete Simmons  
Venice FL  
330-416-4280

**From:** John Holic <[JHolic@Venicegov.com](mailto:JHolic@Venicegov.com)>

**Date:** July 26, 2017 at 11:56:27 AM EDT

**To:** Peter Simmons <[pwsimmonsjr@verizon.net](mailto:pwsimmonsjr@verizon.net)>, City Council  
<[CityCouncil@Venicegov.com](mailto:CityCouncil@Venicegov.com)>

**Cc:** Ed & Sandy Gatterdam <[gattlenn1@verizon.net](mailto:gattlenn1@verizon.net)>, Gerry Gaida <[jgcopter@gmail.com](mailto:jgcopter@gmail.com)>, Tom & Karen Bents <[thomasbentz5@aol.com](mailto:thomasbentz5@aol.com)>, 'Bill Eftax' <[bill.eftax@gmail.com](mailto:bill.eftax@gmail.com)>, 'donna graham' <[myquintin@verizon.net](mailto:myquintin@verizon.net)>, 'S Hizon' <[susanhizon@gmail.com](mailto:susanhizon@gmail.com)>, 'Abene' <[jojoabene@aol.com](mailto:jojoabene@aol.com)>, 'Adams' <[margandglenn@gmail.com](mailto:margandglenn@gmail.com)>, 'Adams2' <[athena47@comcast.net](mailto:athena47@comcast.net)>, 'Albright' <[richard2376@verizon.net](mailto:richard2376@verizon.net)>, 'Aley' <[paley@woh.rr.com](mailto:paley@woh.rr.com)>, 'Altobelli' <[aealtobelli@gmail.com](mailto:aealtobelli@gmail.com)>, 'Anderson' <[marshcreekpad@aol.com](mailto:marshcreekpad@aol.com)>, 'Anderson/Puthoff' <[aliceanderson03@aol.com](mailto:aliceanderson03@aol.com)>, 'Antine' <[mlantine@yahoo.com](mailto:mlantine@yahoo.com)>, 'Arbaugh' <[edgarbaugh@gmail.com](mailto:edgarbaugh@gmail.com)>, 'Arcano' <[rjrkn@yahoo.com](mailto:rjrkn@yahoo.com)>, 'Argentine' <[argentin@twcny.rr.com](mailto:argentin@twcny.rr.com)>, 'Aridgides' <[saridgides@gmail.com](mailto:saridgides@gmail.com)>, 'Armock' <[donarmock@aol.com](mailto:donarmock@aol.com)>, 'Austin' <[austin697@verizon.net](mailto:austin697@verizon.net)>, 'Austin2' <[waustin5@optimum.net](mailto:waustin5@optimum.net)>, 'bachand' <[pegbachand@gmail.com](mailto:pegbachand@gmail.com)>, 'Bade' <[pbade@gmail.com](mailto:pbade@gmail.com)>, 'Balducci' <[balducci3@comcast.net](mailto:balducci3@comcast.net)>, 'Barnhart' <[raybarnhart@comcast.net](mailto:raybarnhart@comcast.net)>, 'Barta' <[lakemeade7@gmail.com](mailto:lakemeade7@gmail.com)>, 'Bartolucci' <[jbart3196@gmail.com](mailto:jbart3196@gmail.com)>, 'Basler' <[baslerki@gmail.com](mailto:baslerki@gmail.com)>, 'Beadle' <[maureen6545@hotmail.com](mailto:maureen6545@hotmail.com)>, 'Beall' <[dbeall4@comcast.net](mailto:dbeall4@comcast.net)>, 'Beatty' <[jbeatty31@comcast.net](mailto:jbeatty31@comcast.net)>, 'Beaulieu'

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<[gbondtibaldi@gmail.com](mailto:gbondtibaldi@gmail.com)>, Edward Lavalley <[ELavalley@Venicegov.com](mailto:ELavalley@Venicegov.com)>

**Subject: Re: Venice FL - PROPOSED FIRE PROTECTION SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS**

Dear Mr. Simmons,

On behalf of Venice City Council, thank you for your comments. The Fire Fee is designed to be tax burden neutral to the residential land owner, however, may need some tweaking in years 2 and 3. From your email, it doesn't sound like you wish to talk about it, but should that change, we will be happy to have a city representative talk with your group about how the Fire Fee works.

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

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**From:** Peter Simmons <[pwsimmonsjr@verizon.net](mailto:pwsimmonsjr@verizon.net)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, July 26, 2017 9:44:23 AM

**To:** City Council

**Cc:** Ed & Sandy Gatterdam; Gerry Gaida; Tom & Karen Bents; 'Bill Eftax'; 'donna graham'; 'S Hizon'; 'Abene'; 'Adams'; 'Adams2'; 'Albright'; 'Aley'; 'Altobelli'; 'Anderson'; 'Anderson/Puthoff'; 'Antine'; 'Arbaugh'; 'Arcano'; 'Argentine'; 'Aridgides'; 'Armock'; 'Austin'; 'Austin2'; 'bachand'; 'Bade'; 'Balducci'; 'Barnhart'; 'Barta'; 'Bartolucci'; 'Basler'; 'Beadle'; 'Beall'; 'Beatty'; 'Beaulieu'; 'Beharrell'; 'Beinner'; 'Belding'; 'Bell'; 'Belsley'; 'Benge'; 'Bennawy'; 'Bennett'; 'Bergman'; 'Berlien'; 'Berlin'; 'Bertin'; 'Berzinis'; 'Bezdziecki'; 'Biel'; 'Black'; 'Blazek'; 'Bobby'; 'Bohachewsky'; 'Boltz'; 'Border'; 'Boudreaux'; 'bouwma'; 'Bowers'; 'Boyer'; 'Boyle'; 'Bracy'; 'Bradley'; 'Bradley2'; 'Breitzig'; 'Brouckman'; 'Bryck'; 'Buchanan'; 'Buck'; 'Buitron'; 'Bumpus'; 'Bunce'; 'Burris'; 'Burtoff'; 'Fuhrmann'; 'Tibaldi'

**Subject:** Venice FL - PROPOSED FIRE PROTECTION SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS

To: Venice FL City Council and Mayor,

It is quite obvious that you are out of touch with the overwhelming push of the American people that want less intrusive government, smaller government and lower taxes.

It is incomprehensible that you must think the residents of Venice FL are that much different than the rest of the United States. I would even go further and state that those of us who are retired on fixed incomes ( and there are many of us ) are opposed to your proposal and I am sure your proposal will be an extremely significant financial burden on many residents of Venice FL. I am appalled and ashamed to have city representative appear to be so far out of touch.

This is not a special assessment that most people relate to a onetime assessment but it is simply a huge tax increase that will continue forever, year after year. The full year FIRE PROTECTION ASSESSMENT represents a 69.77% increase over the two Venice City taxes that are on my annual property tax bill...this increase is outrageous!!! During my working days, if I went to my company's board of directors and suggested I needed an increase of 69% in corporate funds to sustain my business, besides being laughed at, I would be without a job. If the City of Venice needs an increase over the annual inflation rate to maintain its services then it is obvious that gross mismanagement has occurred and those involved should tender their resignation.

The mismanagement of the growth in the City of Venice rears its ugly consequences as a part of this FIRE PROTECTION SPECIAL ASSESSMENT. You as our City Council and Mayor have allowed the residential expansion to go out of control and allowing the additional infrastructure necessary to maintain this growth to go on the backs of the residents of our city. I am embarrassed to see this behavior by our City Leaders. If City Leaders feel the need to allow city expansion ( I would also suggest that most current city residents do not), then have the developers pony up the money to cover the additional infrastructure costs needed to service the new development...maybe development would slow down which would be a good thing.

I hope our City Leaders will reconsider this FIRE PROTECTION SPECIAL ASSESSMENT and become more sensitive to the tax burden of the current residents of Venice FL.

To those who I have blind copied, please send this to your Venice friends that would be interested in opposing this tax...thanks

Pete Simmons  
353 Otter Creek Drive



Venice FL 34292  
330-416-4280

**From:** John Holic

**Sent:** Wednesday, July 26, 2017 6:16 PM

**To:** Bill Dorman <dormawe2@aol.com>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>

**Subject:** Re: Proposed Fire protection special assessments

Dear Mr. Dorman,

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

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

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From: Bill Dorman <[dormawe2@aol.com](mailto:dormawe2@aol.com)>

Sent: Wednesday, July 26, 2017 11:39 AM

Subject: Proposed Fire protection special assessments

To: City Council <[citycouncil@venicegov.com](mailto:citycouncil@venicegov.com)>

Sent from my iPad

To: Venice FL City Council and Mayor,

It is quite obvious that you are out of touch with the overwhelming push of the American people that want less intrusive government, smaller government and lower taxes.

It is incomprehensible that you must think the residents of Venice FL are that much different than the rest of the United States. I would even go further and state that those of us who are retired on fixed incomes ( and there are many of us ) are opposed to your proposal and I am sure your proposal will be an extremely significant financial burden on many residents of Venice FL. I am appalled and ashamed to have city representative appear to be so far out of touch.

This is not a special assessment that most people relate to a onetime assessment but it is simply a huge tax increase that will continue forever, year after year. The full year FIRE PROTECTION ASSESSMENT represents a 69.77% increase over the two Venice City taxes that are on my annual property tax bill...this increase is outrageous!!! During my working days, if I went to my company's board of directors and suggested I needed an increase of 69% in corporate funds to sustain my business, besides being laughed at, I would be

without a job. If the City of Venice needs an increase over the annual inflation rate to maintain its services then it is obvious that gross mismanagement has occurred and those involved should tender their resignation.

The mismanagement of the growth in the City of Venice rears its ugly consequences as a part of this FIRE PROTECTION SPECIAL ASSESSMENT. You as our City Council and Mayor have allowed the residential expansion to go out of control and allowing the additional infrastructure necessary to maintain this growth to go on the backs of the residents of our city. I am embarrassed to see this behavior by our City Leaders. If City Leaders feel the need to allow city expansion ( I would also suggest that most current city residents do not), then have the developers pony up the money to cover the additional infrastructure costs needed to service the new development...maybe development would slow down which would be a good thing.

I hope our City Leaders will reconsider this FIRE PROTECTION SPECIAL ASSESSMENT and become more sensitive to the tax burden of the current residents of Venice FL.

William Dorman  
335 Otter Creek Dr  
Venice Fl  
34292

**From:** John Holic  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 30, 2017 8:03 PM  
**To:** Mary Kean <maryskean@msn.com>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>  
**Cc:** Dennis Kean <denniswkean@msn.com>  
**Subject:** Re: Greatly Disappointed

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

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From: Mary Kean <[maryskean@msn.com](mailto:maryskean@msn.com)>  
Sent: Sunday, July 30, 2017 1:34 PM  
Subject: Greatly Disappointed  
To: City Council <[citycouncil@venicegov.com](mailto:citycouncil@venicegov.com)>  
Cc: Dennis Kean <[denniswkean@msn.com](mailto:denniswkean@msn.com)>

We relocated to Venice upon retirement. Sadly, the positives which drew us here three years ago have slowly eroded with each decision made by City Council. These decisions have proved extremely short-sighted, self-serving, with no attention to getting the Venice House in improved financial order. Preplanned travel will unfortunately prevent our presence at August 21 Fire Fee Public Hearing, but if this Fee is passed we shall be amongst the first to look to relocate elsewhere.

Respectfully,  
Mary and Dennis Kean

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

**From:** John Holic

**Sent:** Monday, July 24, 2017 10:27 AM

**To:** Mark Kreighbaum <mark.kreighbaum@oracle.com>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>; Edward Lavalley <ELavalley@Venicegov.com>; MARK <mark.kreighbaum@oracle.com>

**Subject:** Re: Fire Assessment and a Subsidy

Dear Mr. Kreighbaum,

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

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

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**From:** Mark Kreighbaum <[mark.kreighbaum@oracle.com](mailto:mark.kreighbaum@oracle.com)>

**Sent:** Monday, July 24, 2017 7:54:37 AM

**To:** City Council; Edward Lavalley; MARK

**Subject:** Fire Assessment and a Subsidy

To my city government officials:

To have Pinto manipulate for his workforce housing approvals (marketing spin Nolan Gardens) then ask for subsidies....classic textbook developer sales tactic.

Talking tax increases to fund the fire department while entertaining the Pinto tax break request would not be appropriate. Replace that crumbling fire house.

I started as a kid in the projects, worked 60 hours a week for 35 years to be able to get to Venice full time at age 60 last year. .

I've never written to anybody in government about anything in my life, just pay my taxes, vote, raise my family and volunteer where I can to help my community.

But this is just so ridiculous that nobody ever would believe true.

We expect the mayor and council soon to be seeking tax increases to cover the social services needs for the workforce( and no income ) housing residents.

We did not come here to also help a profiteer fill his pockets too.

Socialism and Capitalism shouldn't mix.

You didn't listen to everyone pleading for responsible growth vs concentrated, gave lip service at the public meetings we attended with decisions pre determined.

At least join with the council members who have already spoken up and please have the courage to unanimously dismiss Pinto as out of line- with clear communication to the citizens of Venice....

Get that news release out

Mark Kreighbaum

451 Padova  
North Venice

**From:** John Holic  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 23, 2017 6:40 PM  
**To:** Kerrigan, Peter F <[peter.kerrigan@enbridge.com](mailto:peter.kerrigan@enbridge.com)>  
**Cc:** City Council <[CityCouncil@Venicegov.com](mailto:CityCouncil@Venicegov.com)>; Edward Lavallee <[ELavallee@Venicegov.com](mailto:ELavallee@Venicegov.com)>  
**Subject:** Re: Fire Assessment

Dear Mr. Kerrigan,  
I did not intend to engage in further dialogue with you, but innuendo really does no good for the residents of Venice. I know of no tax breaks given to developers in the last 7 years that I have served on council. If you are aware of any, please let me know.  
Sincerely,  
John Holic  
Mayor, City of Venice

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**From:** Kerrigan, Peter F <[peter.kerrigan@enbridge.com](mailto:peter.kerrigan@enbridge.com)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 23, 2017 4:28 PM  
**Subject:** Re: Fire Assessment  
**To:** John Holic <[jholic@venicegov.com](mailto:jholic@venicegov.com)>  
**Cc:** City Council <[citycouncil@venicegov.com](mailto:citycouncil@venicegov.com)>, Edward Lavallee <[elavallee@venicegov.com](mailto:elavallee@venicegov.com)>

Mr. Mayor, Thanks for your quick response and I'm encouraged to hear neutral taxes for the residents..... I hope that is the case and I challenge the City Council in years two and three to find the needed funds in the existing City Budget and or stop providing tax breaks to developers which will increase the bottom line and benefit all in the City..... Thank You.... Peter

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 23, 2017, at 5:56 PM, John Holic <[JHolic@Venicegov.com](mailto:JHolic@Venicegov.com)> wrote:

Dear Mr. Kerrigan,  
On behalf of Venice City Council, thank you for your comments. Please note that the intent of the Fire Fee is to make the cost of the Fire Department more transparent and fair. We are attempting to make this fee tax neutral to the homeowners, however, as with anything new it make take some tweaking in years two and three.  
Sincerely,  
John Holic  
Mayor, City of Venice

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**From:** Kerrigan, Peter F <[Peter.Kerrigan@enbridge.com](mailto:Peter.Kerrigan@enbridge.com)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 23, 2017 3:22:27 PM  
**To:** City Council; Edward Lavallee  
**Subject:** Fire Assessment



I have read that the City of Venice does not have enough money to fund the fire department and upkeep of the existing Fire Stations and is therefore considering further taxing the citizens on Venice.... I can't imagine the City not being able to allocate this expense in the City's budget to cover the needed funds.... With the current housing boom we are seeing in our area the City Council should consider the additional tax revenue that will be for coming and allocate these funds towards the Fire Department..... I also don't understand how the City could be considering tax breaks for John Nolen Gardens and other developments, But considering raise the taxes of residents..... This means that I am being asked to make a developer's profits greater and also pay higher taxes as a resident..... I work very hard for what I have and see no reason to be subsidizing a commercial enterprise and the City is OK with sticking it to the residents that live and will be here for the long run..... Let's keep Venice a great place to live and not increases taxes....

Peter Kerrigan  
210 Portofino Drive  
North Venice

**From:** John Holic

**Sent:** Thursday, July 20, 2017 3:40 PM

**To:** Michael Wendroff <wendroffm@gmail.com>; City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>; Edward Lavallee <ELavallee@Venicegov.com>

**Subject:** Re: Fire Assessment

Dear Mr. Wendroff,

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

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

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**From:** Michael Wendroff <[wendroffm@gmail.com](mailto:wendroffm@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Thursday, July 20, 2017 12:48:03 PM

**To:** City Council; Edward Lavallee

**Subject:** Fire Assessment

I have read that the Town of Venice does not have enough money to fund the fire department and is therefore considering further taxing the citizens.

If this is the case, I don't understand how you could be considering tax breaks for John Nolen Gardens.

That means that I am being asked to make a developer's profits greater.

I worked hard for what I have and see no reason to be subsidizing a commercial enterprise.

Michael Wendroff

213 Portofino Drive

North Venice

**From:** Thomas Brener [mailto:thomasbbrener@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 17, 2017 11:30 AM  
**To:** John Holic <JHolic@Venicegov.com>  
**Cc:** City Council <CityCouncil@Venicegov.com>; Edward Lavallee <ELavallee@Venicegov.com>  
**Subject:** RE: Fire Fee

Thank you for the reply. I am aware that since municipalities charge user fees on the tax bills, taxpayers who itemize often deduct the sum of taxes and fees. City guidance (e.g. Lakeland), is provided for reasons of transparency as well as liability. In Venice's case, our experts seem to be looking for ambiguity where there is none. Frankly the issue is not murky, there are 3 well defined bars- only one of which Ms. Senne detailed in her 4/20 memo. Here's the text of the 3 :

"Exception. Service charges used to maintain or improve services (such as trash collection or police and fire protection) are deductible as real estate taxes if: The fees or charges are imposed at a like rate against all property in the taxing jurisdiction, The funds collected are not earmarked; instead, they are commingled with general revenue funds, and Funds used to maintain or improve services are not limited to or determined by the amount of these fees or charges collected."

In any case, it appears that the Fire Department is well on its way to major funding increases- and that probably means that the city taxes will not decline significantly when the fee is put into effect. It's interesting, when I first moved here in 2005, my city tax bill was about half of the county's- currently the city tax is marginally higher than the county's. After this fee is fully implemented, the county tax may be half of the city's.

**THOMAS BRENER**  
GUILFORD CT – VENICE FL  
203 521-4124/M 941 4454134/FL 203 533-5616/CT  
Please note my new email address: [thomasbbrener@gmail.com](mailto:thomasbbrener@gmail.com)

**From:** John Holic [mailto:JHolic@Venicegov.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 16, 2017 11:37 AM  
**To:** thomas brener  
**Cc:** [dpersson@swflgovlaw.com](mailto:dpersson@swflgovlaw.com); Linda Senne  
**Subject:** RE: Fire Fee

Mr. Brenner,  
The topic of the fire fee was discussed at yesterday's meeting and there are definite cases where the fee is a tax deduction and others where it is not as clear. The final outcome is that the City will not take a position and will ask that residents check with their own accountants or tax preparers for an opinion as to how a fire fee will be handled on their specific tax form.  
This answer is consistent with the approach we used in financial planning as each individual's tax situation varied and one size does not fit all.  
Sincerely,  
John Holic  
Mayor, City of Venice

**From:** thomas brener [<mailto:thomasbbrener@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 11, 2017 7:22 PM  
**To:** John Holic <[JHolic@Venicegov.com](mailto:JHolic@Venicegov.com)>  
**Subject:** Re: Fire Fee

Indeed. Thank you.

Thomas Brener  
Venice, FL / Guilford, Ct  
C 203 521 4124  
Note new address - [thomasbbrener@gmail.com](mailto:thomasbbrener@gmail.com)

On May 11, 2017, at 6:53 PM, John Holic <[JHolic@Venicegov.com](mailto:JHolic@Venicegov.com)> wrote:

Tom,  
Thanks for the comments, it will be vetted on Monday. I do not like to have Council receive conflicting information and it is our intention, I am sure, to do what is best for the residents but to do so, requires consistent accurate information.  
Regards,  
John

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**From:** Thomas Brener <[thomasbbrener@gmail.com](mailto:thomasbbrener@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 11, 2017 5:54:09 PM  
**To:** Robert Daniels  
**Cc:** City Council  
**Subject:** RE: Fire Fee

Thank you for the response, but it's hard to wade through the equivocations in that letter. Ms. Senne's comment that deductibility is a likelihood "for the vast majority" and that "it depends"- is pretty much contradicted at the end of her letter. If the IRS stipulates that the bar for deductibility is that the tax be "uniformly at a like rate" – that bar is not met by the methodology that the Council has chosen. Other Florida communities (Lakeland) have concluded that the tax is NOT deductible. I certainly recognize that the city is not in a position to offer tax advice. But that is not what I have asked for. I certainly hope that the council requests the opinion that Ms Senne has suggested prior to enacting this new tax. It does matter, and a new tax of \$400 a year for an average homeowner is not trivial. I appreciate the way you oversee our budgeting process; I would stress that the bigger issue here is that when departments no longer need to compete for funding, and can instead gain sustenance from a dedicated fund, the loser is the taxpayer.

**THOMAS BRENER**  
GUILFORD CT – VENICE FL  
203 521-4124/M 941 4454134/FL 203 533-5616/CT

Please note my new email address: [thomasbbrener@gmail.com](mailto:thomasbbrener@gmail.com)

**From:** Robert Daniels [<mailto:RDaniels@Venicegov.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 11, 2017 3:31 PM  
**To:** Thomas Brener  
**Subject:** Re: Fire Fee

See email from Finance

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On Thu, May 11, 2017 at 1:58 PM -0400, "Thomas Brener" <[thomasbbrener@gmail.com](mailto:thomasbbrener@gmail.com)> wrote:

Dear Mayor Holic:

I am disappointed but not surprised that your staff has not been able to answer a simple question- as to whether the fire fee is tax deductible. IT'S NOT. And its shocking that this Council will be voting on Tuesday without knowing. Early on, taxpayers were advised that this process would take time, and that at preliminary stages, questions like mine were premature. It now appears that the vote will come at your next meeting- conveniently, when many seasonal residents have already left. As we all know, the intent of the fee is to take that messy pension-fund shortfall off your plate, however, this new TAX is highly regressive and will spur runaway spending in that department. It is obvious that the fire fee will start small, perhaps 25%, and no one will be the wiser as the annual percentage grows to 100%. I recognize that this decision has already been made and that the announcement has merely been put off until summer when it is less likely to raise a ripple. If you are wondering why I am annoyed, please review the chain of emails.

**THOMAS BRENER**  
GUILFORD CT – VENICE FL  
203 521-4124/M 941 4454134/FL 203 533-5616/CT  
Please note my new email address: [thomasbbrener@gmail.com](mailto:thomasbbrener@gmail.com)

**From:** John Holic [<mailto:JHolic@Venicegov.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 26, 2017 7:28 PM  
**To:** thomas brener  
**Cc:** Edward Lavallee; David Persson; Linda Senne  
**Subject:** Re: tax deductible

Dear Mr. Brener,  
Unfortunately, I have not received further clarification. It is a topic that will be addressed at the next fire fee meeting.  
Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

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**From:** thomas brener <[thomasbbrener@gmail.com](mailto:thomasbbrener@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 26, 2017 5:33 PM  
**To:** John Holic  
**Subject:** Re: tax deductible

Have your financial people provided any clarity on this question? I await your response.

Thomas Brener  
Venice, FL / Guilford, Ct  
C 203 521 4124  
Note new address - [thomasbbrener@gmail.com](mailto:thomasbbrener@gmail.com)

On Apr 17, 2017, at 5:16 PM, John Holic <[JHolic@Venicegov.com](mailto:JHolic@Venicegov.com)> wrote:

Mr. Brener,  
I will have to get back to you.  
Regards,  
John Holic

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**From:** Thomas Brener <[thomasbbrener@gmail.com](mailto:thomasbbrener@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2017 4:12:17 PM  
**To:** John Holic  
**Subject:** tax deductible

Thank you for the swift response.

Lakeland Florida adopted such a fee and advised taxpayers that the fee was NOT deductible. See <https://www.lakelandgov.net/faf/frequently-asked-questions>

The IRS ruled similarly in California- <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-wd/1310029.pdf> - here the IRS describes the fee as not deductible under Federal law- and I would imagine that federal deductibility would not vary from state to state.

Probably my error, maybe you have better information?

**THOMAS BRENER**  
GUILFORD CT – VENICE FL  
203 521-4124/M 941 4454134/FL 203 533-5616/CT  
Please note my new email address: [thomasbbrener@gmail.com](mailto:thomasbbrener@gmail.com)

**From:** John Holic [<mailto:JHolic@Venicegov.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2017 3:42 PM  
**To:** City Council; Thomas Brener  
**Cc:** Edward Lavalley; Terry Holmes; Lori Stelzer; Heather Taylor; David Persson  
**Subject:** Re: Fire Fee Revisited

Dear Mr. Brener,

On behalf of Venice City Council, thank you for your comments. For your information, we have been assured that the fire fee assessment is tax deductible. I cannot comment on the rest as we do not have final figures for any comparisons.

Sincerely,

John Holic

Mayor, City of Venice

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From: Thomas Brener <[thomasbbrener@gmail.com](mailto:thomasbbrener@gmail.com)>  
Sent: Monday, April 17, 2017 3:33 PM  
Subject: Fire Fee Revisited  
To: City Council <[citycouncil@venicegov.com](mailto:citycouncil@venicegov.com)>  
Cc: Terry Holmes <[tfholmes33@gmail.com](mailto:tfholmes33@gmail.com)>

*Dear Councilmembers and Mayor:*

2008 was the last time that the City of Venice considered implementing a fire fee. 9 years ago, a study was commissioned, public meetings ensued and a well-paid consultant created a power-point presentation to assist the Council in determining assessment methodologies (“service calls” or “availability”). Indeed, then, as now, the consultant’s job was to move the ball forward through every gate, explaining to the Council that failure to meet deadlines would close-off future options.

Now we have a new study, a new fire fee proposal, and a new power-point presentation of methodologies. But, though these are all dated recently, the old study differs in no substantial way from what you are now considering. About the only thing that has changed is that the Fire Pension Fund is in somewhat worse shape than it was before. I would urge all Council Members to go review those old records, and learn from them.

Probably the biggest takeaway from history is that the people of Venice hated the idea. They hated that this new “tax” was disguised as a “user fee”, they hated that the new “tax” would no longer be tax-deductible. They hated that the Council was using this device to increase capital spending (and as a mechanism to sideline that pesky pension shortfall). There was also considerable skepticism that ad-valorem taxes would decline in proportion to fee increases, and, sadly, there was backlash directed towards the City Fire Department that probably resulted in a fruitless 6 year exploration of “consolidation” of our fire department with county.



There are, of course, many other reasons why the fire fee is a bad idea- most notably fairness. The fire fee, a non ad-valorem fee in every permutation, basically penalizes the least valuable properties, penalizes anyone who gets a homestead or military exemption, and rewards those homeowners and businesses that own the most valuable properties. It is essentially a “regressive” non-deductible tax that affects those least able to afford it.

I trust you will look into all this deeply, before that ball gets rolling too fast. I noticed that June 10<sup>th</sup> is newest deadline, and it is fast approaching. You have been told that if you do not approve the Venice Fire Fee in 5 weeks, the county will have insufficient time to issue the bills to taxpayers for implementation in 2017.

T. Brener  
Venice