

Mercedes Barcia

From: Lori Stelzer
Sent: Monday, August 14, 2017 9:10 AM
To: City Council
Subject: FW: Venice Fire Assessment

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: Donald Kummer [mailto:donkmmr@aol.com]
Sent: Thursday, August 10, 2017 2:24 PM
To: Lori Stelzer <LStelzer@Venicegov.com>
Subject: Venice Fire Assessment

To, Members of the Venice City Council

The purpose of this short note is to request individual Council members carefully reassess their positions before voting on the Fire Assessment issue. It appears the Council has a lot invested in consultant studies.

For those who think the timing of mid August should be a non issue my first exposure to the Assessment was your July 20 letter. Perhaps my negligence. Detailed consultant data is dated in July. Not sure of the urgency. Tax payers should have time to digest and question this important matter when they return to Venice. What's the hurry?

Still having trouble determining the REAL reason for this change other than to add more payers to the system. Suspect it is in the data but why not clearly tell us how many and how much money is generated.. A tax is a tax is a tax. I do not welcome not having it as a deduction on my federal tax return. How much are we paying the consultants? Because Sarasota does it this way is no reason for Venice to follow suit. Still believe we should evaluate every project and line item as part of our regular budget.

Some may be critical of local and county governments over their stewardship of our precious tax dollars as evidenced by the Venice library debacle and the large early retirement payout to the fire chief.(not sure on that one but do have a recollection-longer I live shorter my memory.

Sometimes wonder if anyone reads this stuff.
Would be nice to hear even if it says you are full of it again.

Respectfully,
Donald Kummer
239 Ponce de Leon Ave
Venice

Donkmmr@aol.com

Sent from my iPad

Need to Report an Issue? SeeClickFix Venice Connect is available as an app for Android and iPhone. Select SeeClickFix from your app store on your device and choose Venice, Florida. There is also a link to the program on the city's website, www.venicegov.com, or go directly to SeeClickFix at <http://www.seeclickfix.com/Venice>

PLEASE NOTE: This agency is a public entity and is subject to Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, concerning public records. Email communications are covered under such laws; therefore, email sent or received on this entity's computer system, including your email address, may be disclosed to the public and media upon request. If you do not want your email address released to a public records request, do not send electronic mail to this entity. Instead, contact this office by phone or in writing.

Mercedes Barcia

From: susan ireland <sireland911@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 11, 2017 3:56 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Venice Fire Fee is OK
Attachments: icon.png



I am NOT opposed to the new fire fee.

We are full time residents of Venetian Golf and River (for four years).

Our taxes here are less than where we moved from.

We had an annual fire fee where we moved from. This was not part of our taxes, but billed annually with our utility bill.

Many other communities (Sarasota) have a fire fee.

We appreciate the state of the art fire station that is just minutes from our residence, and believe all residents should have the same.

I really disagree with the info being put out in the media and by those running for city council, that tell residents their tax bill is going to increase by over 40%. That is so misleading. Our TOTAL tax bill will only increase by less than 7%. Only a small portion of our total tax bill will increase by 34%. Other items may decrease.

Thank you.

Kathryn S. Ireland
114 Torcello Court

Mercedes Barcia

From: Randy Shipley <rashiple@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 11, 2017 5:02 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Fire Protection Special Assessment

Mayor Holic and members of the Venice City Council:

I am a homeowner living at 1742 Kilruss Drive in Venice.

I have received the "notice of public hearing to consider imposition and collection of fire protection special assesments."

I wish to express my concerns regarding the proposed assessments. I am retired and living on a relatively fixed income (social security plus savings). I calculate that the additional amount that I would pay next year for this assessment would be in excess of \$295.00 and could eventually go as high as \$498.00. This estimate is based on the current assessed value of my home. I assume that as the assessed value of my home increases, the amount of this assessment would also increase.

This assessment would put a severe strain on our household budget, since there is no additional income coming into our home to offset this expense.

My recommendation is that consideration for this assessment be dropped. I am sure that there are many homeowners in Venice that are facing the same income issue as me and who feel the same way about the assessment.

Please vote against this proposed assessment.

Best Regards,

Randolph A Shipley
Jo A Shipley

Mercedes Barcia

From: abrodsky@netzero.com
Sent: Friday, August 11, 2017 9:00 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Proposed Fire Fee

To whom it may concern,

We are deeply concerned regarding City of Venice proposed Fire Fee.

We are both retired since 2013 and our household gross income is about \$24,000/yearly (2 person) and proposed additional tax is really something for us.

Our current 2016 Property Tax is \$2,908.11 and your proposal is actually increasing our Property Tax (or you can call it Fee) for about 10% for 1st year and about 20% for next consecutive years.

We understand that the fire service and the police service are two of the most necessary services that the city provides, however in spite of that we are strongly against this proposal - we just do not have any extra money to pay for it.

Please, reply us and let us know, where we can find additional \$240 -480 to pay off your Fire Fee.

Regards,

Aleksandr Brodsky
Svetlana Titova
1154 Cielo Court
North Venice FL, 34275
Tel. (941) 484-6520

Final Photos Taken Seconds Before Tragedy Struck

omglane.com

<http://thirdpartyoffers.netzero.net/TGL3232/598e536cd491d536c6b0dst04duc>



Mercedes Barcia

From: Joanne Choy <jochoy4@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 11, 2017 10:57 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Fire Assessment

City of Venice
401 W Venice Avenue
Venice, Florida 34285

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing in response to the Fire Protection Special Assessment Letter notifying me of the Public Hearing (Parcel No. 0407111030).

Fire Protection is critical to our community. However, I object to this approach for the following reasons:

- 1) the assessment is not tax deductible, therefore, I urge the Council to keep the fire protection funds in the general funds;
- 2) the city proposes a partial rebate of our operating millage rate. We are already seeing an increase in our bills because of the debt service for the \$16 million public safety bond and \$18 million road bond. The additional annual increase of \$315 for the Fire Protection Assessment means a sizable increase in my overall tax bill. Therefore, if the assessment is implemented, the full amount passed on in the fire assessment should be rebated in our millage rate rather than keeping those funds for "needed projects" which were not communicated to taxpayers;
- 3) the next FY budget for fire protection appears to increase from \$6,551,574 two years ago, from \$7,701,000 this year to approximately \$9,429,638 next year. There is no explanation for the significant increase;
- 4) the Council indicates, with this initial notification, that the fire assessment fee may double in FY19; without full rebate in our millage rate. I strongly urge the Council to reduce our millage rate dollar for dollar if the assessment is implemented;
- 5) The letter refers to expenses incurred by the City in administering and collecting the assessment and statutory discounts through employing efficiencies of collecting the assessments annually via property taxes. However, the details were not communicated fully in the letter. From my online review, it appears there are savings and significant administrative costs. The household implication for expenses and the anticipated discounts should be clearly communicated to taxpayers;
- 6) We received the letter August 2nd after being out of town. I object to a requirement to submit any comments within 20 days (business or calendar) of the letter date of July 20, 2017. This date occurs before three public meetings being held for taxpayer questions (2 on 8/16 and 1 on 8/21). At a minimum, taxpayers should have been given a deadline after the 8/21 meeting. I discovered the 8/16 meeting date through social media; not notification from the City of Venice.

Sincerely,

Joanne K. Choy
230 Santa Maria Street, #135
Venice, FL 34285

Mercedes Barcia

From: nycework <nycework@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, August 14, 2017 10:22 AM
To: City Council
Subject: PROPOSED FIRE PROTECTION SPECIAL ASSESSMENT

Good morning, my name is Virginia Horkan and I live at 603 Tyson Terrace Venice, Florida 34285

I am writing to express my serious concerns over this proposed fire protection special assessment. I believe that the special assessment will cause serious financial burden to many of the residents of Venice.

Many of us that live here in Venice are retirees on a fixed income. The imposition of this fire protection assessment, may just tip the financial scales for some of us, to the point that we may no longer be able to afford to live in Venice.

I would like to go on record as saying that I oppose and do not support this special fire protection assessment.

Sincerely,

Virginia & Noel Horkan
603 Tyson Terrace
Venice, Fl 34285
914.805.5649

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

BIRD BAY MASTER CONDO ASSOCIATION

606 Bird Bay Drive South
Venice, Florida 34285

8/16/2017

TO: City of Venice: JHolic@Venicegov.com ; citycouncil@venicegov.com

RE: Formal Objection to the Fire Fee as represented in the Final Draft Report of 7/10/2017

BY: Email with written letter to follow

Dear Mayor Holic and Council Members

Please consider this my formal objection to the Draft Fire Fee Resolution as the President of Bird Bay Master Condominium Association consisting of 675 Condominiums Unit Holders in the City of Venice.

The Draft Report notes a variety of legal requirements that the Resolution fails to achieve:

- 1) *"Pursuant to Florida case law... the assessment must be fairly and reasonably apportioned among the properties that receive the special benefit. "*

Final Draft Report, Stantec

For reasons stated below, the fire fee is not "reasonably apportioned. A fire fee may or may not be appropriate for the City of Venice. However, we believe that the proposed methodology is flawed. Errors and omissions in the Consultant's report have been perpetuated in the draft ordinance. Some of these errors specifically affect Condominiums, and for the city to proceed forward in the face of such errors would be actionable.

In the final draft report of the proposed fire fee, Stantec (Consultant) summarizes the most basic requirement of providing municipal special assessments:

- 2) *"The costs associated with these services are recovered in proportion to the benefit received from these services provided by the City."*

Unfortunately, the proportionality has been compromised in the implementation:

- 1) Tier 2 calculations are incorrect with respect to all condominiums in Venice. The Sarasota property assessor incorporates the value of the common property into each unit owner's property assessment. Consequently, the value of each unit's "structure" is inflated. This has resulted in inequities whereby condominium owners will unfairly pay inflated tier 2 assessments. I am familiar with Attorney Christopher Roes justification for the inclusion of real property value in the structural assessment - and I consider that

argument insufficient. Indeed the argument made by Mr. Roes confirms that the basis for the fee derives from ad-valorem assessments, which is clearly not allowed by statute.

- 2) Tier 1 calculations are applied incorrectly to condominiums. The Tier 1 fee, “the response readiness pool”, is assessed on each “parcel” of land. A condominium sits on a single parcel of land that is owned by the Association. It appears that the Tier 1 fee is being assessed based on each unit owner having a street address- not a parcel of land. This is, of course, the flip side of #1. And the justification
- 3) An obvious example showing how the error can be corrected is evident in the treatment of Mobile Home Parks. In the proposed fire fee, the mobile home park lessees are exempt from Tier 1 fees because there is only one owner of the parcel- often the owner of the park. The Landowner of the single parcel pays a Tier 1 fee of \$93 for the entire complex. Bay Indies, for example pays a Tier 1 of \$93.92- not \$93.92 multiplied by 1300 lots. This should be comparable to a condominium in which the Condominium Association owns the land as a common element. However, in the case of a condominium, the Tier 1 assessment will be charged for each addressee- not each landowner. Interestingly, in the case of the mobile home parks, the Lessees are also exempt from the tax on the improvement because these improvements are not considered “real property” by the Sarasota Assessor. The only “fire Fee” contemplated in the proposal for mobile home parks is for the single tier 1 fee for all the land and tier 2 fees assessed on real property fixed to the land- such as clubhouses. Interestingly, there is no requirement that “fees for service” comply with ad valorem assessments. Quite the contrary, ad valorem assessments are specifically excluded, by statute, as the basis for such a fee.
- 4) Beyond the arguments of fairness, there is also an argument of NOTICE. The City has not complied with FL Truth in Millage, and has missed the deadline for TRIM notification for the upcoming tax year. The public has not been properly informed and the segmentation of TRIM does not comply with the requirement of the FL statute. This alone should give Council opportunity to suspend this decision until the issue of fair apportionment can be reconsidered.
- 5) The fire fee is not tax deductible, and the statement on the public notice that taxpayers should seek the advice of their tax consultant is misleading. Misinformation being worse than no information, I urge that you provide clarity on this issue before adopting any resolution.

Please include this correspondence in the public hearing on the 21st of August.

Thank You,

Terrance Holmes BB Master Condo Association President

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

Dear Council –

Please consider this letter our formal and vehement opposition to your fire protection special assessment plans.

This proposed assessment will raise our taxes nearly 15%. This is an outrageous increase especially when considering:

- (1) Many of the impacted people are living on fixed incomes
- (2) There is already a revenue source for fire protection
- (3) The likelihood of a home fire has steadily dropped – and by more than 20% over the last 10 years. In fact, according to the National Fire Protection Association there is less than a 0.4% chance of having a home fire – and most of these fires cause only minimal damage.
- (4) Because this is a perpetual “special assessment”, it won’t even be deductible on income tax returns
- (5) Funding for “other needed projects” should be based on merit with separate taxpayer approval and this proposal should not be viewed as a source for extra funds to be spent arbitrarily

In view of the high cost and relatively low benefit associated with this proposed plan, we expect you to make the difficult budgeting decisions to control expenses and live within a reasonable budget built on current revenue streams. Increases of this magnitude are wholly unacceptable.

Sincerely,



Tom & Cindy Spence
405 Arborview Lane
Venice, FL 34292

July 31, 2017

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

To Whom It May Concern:

RE: Fire Protection special Assessments
Parcel No: 0407151085
612 Leslie Lane 85 Venice, FL 34285

This letter is to notify the City of Venice how upset we are and opposed to the proposed collection of fire protection special assessments on our property to be considered at a public hearing on August 21, 2017.

Although we support an assessment in principle, we question the calculation of it as it will significantly increase our property assessment due in November by a considerable amount for unspecified years. The notice states that the assessment could be raised to 100% without further notice, which is unconscionable.

You state that "fire services are funded through assessment programs in many Florida cities and counties, however you fail to mention which ones and at what rate to the property owners.

The City of Venice is making up for poor fiscal management and non-visionary financial decisions in the past by penalizing middle class citizens like ourselves who are close to retirement yet still working full time. We are now questioning whether or not we can continue to afford living here when we retire in the next few years.

We should not be penalized so severely because the City of Venice failed to dedicate funding sources to pay for fire protection services until now with little advanced notice.

We respectfully encourage the Mayor and City Council to not approve the collection of fire protection assessments as calculated and come back with a plan more fair and equitable to all.

Sincerely,



David L. Pierce
Linda R. Pierce
612 Leslie Lane
Venice, FL 34285

August 8, 2017

To: City of Venice

Re: Imposition and Collection of Fire Protection Special Assessment Notice

From: Dolores Cekola,

934 Capri Isle Blvd. Parcel # 0402022012

To the city of Venice Florida,

I have been a 'snowbird' for the last 12 years to Florida. Not living there long enough to become a Florida resident. I am writing my concern over this special assessment. I am worried about our City and their lack of funding. Just last year we were re-assessed for flood area and now the fire department needs funds. What is happening with the city budget? I have firsthand witnessed the large growth this area has undergone and can only think your increased commercial and homeowners status should be paying for these increased needs.

I will not be able to attend your August 21st meeting so please consider my thoughts and feedback from this letter to know I am not in agreement of any new funding that needs to come from outside the city budget.

Thank you for the time.

Dee Cekola

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

Marcia Dreyer
Jul E Dreyer

parcel# 0407151063

CLERK 14AUG'17 PM12:16

Aug. 3, 2017

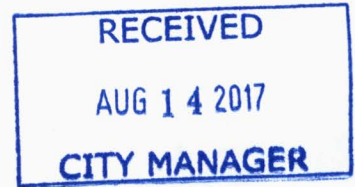
My name is Sandra
Robinson and I live at
605 Christina Ct., Venice, FL.
I am concerned about
the proposed assessment
for fire protection. This
proposal is a huge added
expense. My condo
would increase \$228⁰⁰

for 2018 and \$457⁴⁸
thereafter. I am a single
owner and this would
put me thinking about
living somewhere less
expensive. It is too much
in such a short time.

I wish I could be at
the meeting, but unfortunately
can't.

Sandra Robinson

July 31, 2017



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

To Whom It May Concern:

RE: Fire Protection special Assessments
Parcel No: 0407151085
612 Leslie Lane 85 Venice, FL 34285

This letter is to notify the City of Venice how upset we are and opposed to the proposed collection of fire protection special assessments on our property to be considered at a public hearing on August 21, 2017.

Although we support an assessment in principle, we question the calculation of it as it will significantly increase our property assessment due in November by a considerable amount for unspecified years. The notice states that the assessment could be raised to 100% without further notice, which is unconscionable.

You state that "fire services are funded through assessment programs in many Florida cities and counties, however you fail to mention which ones and at what rate to the property owners.

The City of Venice is making up for poor fiscal management and non-visionary financial decisions in the past by penalizing middle class citizens like ourselves who are close to retirement yet still working full time. We are now questioning whether or not we can continue to afford living here when we retire in the next few years.

We should not be penalized so severely because the City of Venice failed to dedicate funding sources to pay for fire protection services until now with little advanced notice.

We respectfully encourage the Mayor and City Council to not approve the collection of fire protection assessments as calculated and come back with a plan more fair and equitable to all.

Sincerely,

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is "David L. Pierce" and the second is "Linda R. Pierce".

David L. Pierce
Linda R. Pierce
612 Leslie Lane
Venice, FL 34285

Mercedes Barcia

From: governorcb@comcast.net
Sent: Monday, August 14, 2017 3:43 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Proposed Fire Protection Special Assessment

August 14, 2017

Dear City Officials,

I am writing this to express my objection to this special assessment. I am a resident of Bird Bay Sea Grape Condominium. I think it is unfair in that we will be taxed twice for our parcel of land for Tier 1 and again for Tier 2 because the structure building value includes a portion of condominium land. The increase for 2018 is a 52% increase and will go higher in future years. This increase seems to be contrary to Florida's Homestead Act and it isn't even tax deductible.

If necessary, I suggest that a reasonable assessment be included in our property taxes so that at least we can declare them on our tax forms.

Also, does the Venice Fire Dept. conduct fund raisers? I live in Arlington, Va. during the summer months and I know for a fact that they do. I'm sure many other cities do.

I hope this issue is resolved considering these factors. Also, special provisions should be made regarding condominiums. We shouldn't be taxed the same as a private homeowner.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Carol A. Baldassarri
656 White Pine Tree Rd.
Venice, FL 34285
(703-203-3332)

Mercedes Barcia

From: John Moeckel <jcminfl@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, August 14, 2017 11:38 PM
To: City Council; Edward Lavallee
Subject: Venice Fire Fee

Dear Mayor Holic and City Council,

I'm troubled over the new Fire Fee program that the City is looking at. Earlier this year I attended a Fire Fee meeting where a decision was made to 50% Fire Fee funding. The discussion also included reducing the millage as to make this new process revenue neutral. At that time there was no discussion about the Fire Fee being tax deductible.

Now, we find out that the new program is not revenue neutral and the Fire Fee is not tax deductible.

The notice I received from the City, dated July 20, 2017 indicates a tax increase of \$281.51 on my property the first year and that could be doubled to \$563.00 by City Council. This is on top of a voter approved bond program. This is way too much of a tax increase at one time. The impact on many of our citizens who are on fixed incomes is unacceptable. Prices are increasing on so many every day things and this burden is just too much.

In addition to this program will the City also consider a "Police Fee Program" in the future?

I would request that City Council consider paring this back to a much lower tax increase and increase this funding slowly over time.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Best,

John Moeckel, Citizen of Venice.

Mercedes Barcia

From: gregory furda <gafurda@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 15, 2017 10:51 AM
To: John Holic
Cc: City Council
Subject: Formal Objection to the Fire Fee

8/15/2017

Dear Mayor Holic:

The buildings in the Waterside Association at Bird Bay Village are equipped with interior FIRE SPRINKLERS in each unit. Also, the construction material for the buildings are made-up of CONCRETE BLOCK. The interior wall studs are METAL and the exterior stairs are CONCRETE. Fire extinguishers are mounted on the exteriors of each building. From a fire safety stand point, all of the above will help reduce the demands of the FIRE DEPARTMENT. As a retired Fire Captain with the Trenton Fire Department in New Jersey all the above absolutely makes a large difference when it comes to fire suppression, therefore once again lessening the demands on the Venice Fire Department

Please consider this my formal objection to the Draft Fire Fee Resolution as the President of Waterside at Bird Bay Village Condominium Association consisting of 60 condominium units in the City of Venice.

The Draft Report notes a variety of legal requirements that the Resolution fails to achieve:

1) "Pursuant to Florida case law... the assessment must be fairly and reasonably apportioned among the properties that receive the special benefit." Final Draft Report, Stantec

For reasons stated below, the fire fee is not "reasonably apportioned." A fire fee may or may not be appropriate for the City of Venice. However, we believe that the proposed methodology is flawed. Errors and omissions in the Consultant's report have been perpetuated in the draft ordinance. Some of these errors specifically affect condominiums, and for the City to proceed forward in the face of such errors would be actionable.

Regarding the final draft report of the proposed fire fee, the consultant (Stantec) summarizes the most basic requirement of providing municipal special assessments:

2) "The costs associated with these services are recovered in proportion to the benefit received from these services provided by the City."

Unfortunately, the proportionality has been compromised in the implementation:

1) Tier 2 calculations are incorrect with respect to all condominiums in Venice. The Sarasota property assessor incorporates the value of the common property into each unit owner's property assessment. Consequently, the value of each unit's structure is inflated. This has resulted in inequities whereby condominium owners will unfairly pay inflated Tier 2 assessments. The justification by attorney Christopher Roes for the inclusion of real property value in the structural assessment argument insufficient. The argument by Mr. Roes confirms that the basis for the fee derives from ad-valorem assessments, which is clearly not allowed by statute.

2) Tier 1 calculations are applied incorrectly to condominiums. The Tier 1 fee, "the response readiness pool", is assessed on each "parcel" of land. A condominium sits on a single parcel of land that is owned by the Association. It

appears that the Tier 1 fee is being assessed based one each unit owner having a street address - not a parcel of land. This is, of course, the flip side of #1, and the justification.

3) An obvious example showing how the error can be corrected is evident in the treatment of Mobile Home Parks. In the proposed fire fee, the mobile home park lessees are exempt from Tier 1 fees because there is only one owner of the parcel - often the owner of the park. The Landowner of the single parcel pays a Tier 1 fee of \$93 for the entire complex. Bay Indies, for example pays a Tier 1 of \$93.92 - not \$93.92 multiplied by 1,300 lots. This should be comparable to a condominium in which the Condominium Association owns the land as a common element. However, in the case of a condominium, the Tier 1 assessment will be charged for each addressee - not each landowner. In the case of the mobile home parks, the Lessees are also exempt from the tax on the improvement because these improvements are not considered "real property" by the Sarasota Assessor. The only "fire fee" contemplated in the proposal for mobile home parks is for the single Tier 1 fee for all the land and Tier 2 fees assessed on real property fixed to the land - such as clubhouses. Interestingly, there is no requirement that "fees for service" comply with ad valorem assessments. Quite the contract, ad valorem assessments are specifically excluded, by statute, as the basis for such a fee.

4) Beyond the arguments of fairness, there is also an argument of NOTICE. The City has not complied with FL Truth in Millage, and has missed the deadline for TRIM notification for the upcoming tax year. The public has not been properly informed and the segmentation of TRIM does not comply with the requirement of the FL statute. This alone should give Council opportunity to suspend this decision until the issue of fair apportionment can be reconsidered.

5) The fire fee is not tax deductible, and the statement on the public notice that taxpayers should seek the advice of their tax consultant is misleading. Misinformation being worse than no information, I urge that you provide clarity on this issue before adopting any resolution.

Please include this correspondence in the public hearing on the 21st of August. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Gregory Furda
President, Waterside at Bird Bay Village

Mercedes Barcia

From: Eric Carlson <ericjoelcarlson@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 15, 2017 10:54 AM
To: City Council
Subject: Fire Assessment

To Whom it may Concern,

I am against splintering our current tax bill and having an ongoing separate assessment for fire services. Such an assessment would defeat the spirit and purpose of the current homestead law and subject us to a substantial cost increase. It would also provide a dis-incentive to manage costs associated with future expenditures.

If upgrades to our fire services are required, I would prefer a one time request for additional funding over the current proposal, which would allow our taxes to increase without adequate visibility and limitations.

Eric Carlson
609 Christina Court
Venice, FL
603-557-0328 (C)

Mercedes Barcia

From: Nina Christman <ninachristman@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 15, 2017 11:54 AM
To: City Council
Cc: Nina Christman
Subject: Fire Tax Letter
Attachments: Fire Tax Opposition Letter.docx

Please open, read and then post.

Fire Tax Opposition Letter

My husband and I own a home at 801 Laguna Drive in the City of Venice. We both vehemently oppose the fire tax you have proposed.

The reasons you outlined in your letter to the taxpayers in the city for the proposed fire dept tax is an outright lie.

We all know the reason for the fire tax is twofold.

First: The fire department pension is bankrupt due to gross pension fund miss management. In addition to that- allowing Fire Dept staff to retire at 45 and receive full pensions is an absolute outrage.

Second: The City and the council's gross misappropriation of the city budget and other funds is infuriating.

For Example:

- 1) The 11 million dollar Venice Performing Art Center- an outrageously irresponsible building that we did not need and does not attract performers and musicians.
- 2) The brick library you had demolished for mold. FYI- Bricks don't harbor mold and can be easily cleaned.
- 3) All the fancy New blue signs that the city has plastered all over the town for tourists pointing out beaches, downtown center, ect.
- 4) All the useless meaningless John Nolan historic signs on top of nearly every street sign.
- 5) All the fancy black lights that line the new expensive paved walk path in the middle of Venice Ave.

6) All the new city trucks, SUV's and other vehicles the city employees drive around town.

I could go on and on but what is the point. Your spending has been irresponsible and frivolous. Shame on you and your failure to serve the people who elected you. You clearly do not have a clue how to run the business of city government.

Nina and Mike Christman

Mercedes Barcia

From: billm622@comcast.net
Sent: Tuesday, August 15, 2017 12:00 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Proposed Tax

I strongly protest the proposed tax increase. I'm 70 years old and been a Venice resident for 20 years. I expect to live the remainder of my life here. This proposed tax increase is unacceptable and though a Registered Republican, will vote for the opponent of any City Official that votes to chase me away from my home. Don't do it!

William L Meyer
622 Leslie Ln
Venice, FL 34285

941 321 8314

Mercedes Barcia

From: Jane Gilman <beasley1209@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 15, 2017 12:42 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Fire Department Assessment

Please consider this a NO to the Fire Department Assessment to be discussed at your up coming City Council meeting.

Jane A. Gilman, Owner
607 Tyson Terrace
Venice, Florida 34285

Mercedes Barcia

From: Thomas Brener <thomasbbrener@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 15, 2017 1:52 PM
To: John Holic; City Council
Cc: Terry Holmes; gregory furda
Subject: Fairness and the Fire Fee
Attachments: Comparing Properties' Tax Bills.pdf

Dear Mayor Holic and Councilmembers:

One of the principal justifications for implementing the fire fee is “fairness”. A “fair” fire fee would expand the base, so that each beneficiary actually pays a proportional share of the cost of fire protection. But, in the methodology currently being contemplated, the base is almost the same as current ad valorem assessments. The airport, many non-profit associations, and most mobile homes are exempted by the assessor, and (though this is not a legal requirement) have also been exempted from the fire fee. Since few new users will be charged the fee, about the only thing that the fee does is raise additional revenue - by substantially increasing the burden for modest homesteaded properties and condominiums.

To lessen the new burden of this fee during the first year, Council calculated a millage rate reduction for all properties. Not surprisingly that “offset” has increased the inequity, thereby highlighting the problem. Let’s compare a free standing house on the island with a modest condominium in Bird Bay. Note that these figures represent only the first year of the fire fee- a gap that will grow exponentially when the fire fee is doubled in 2 years.

636 Apalachicola is a 4000 square foot 4 bedroom house- built year 1993. It has a “Just Value of \$732,300 that through homestead exemptions is reduced to \$524,535. Here’s what the proposed fire fee does to the tax burden for this home:

Current Ad Valorem City Tax at 3.6mil	\$1825.
2016 TRIM at 3.1mil -to partially offset fire fee	\$1577.
Fire Fee (Tier 1 and Tier 2 -on structure)	\$303.
Proposed Total Tax including Fire Fee	\$1880.
<u>Tax Increase for this property</u>	<u>\$55. 3% increase</u>

811 Waterside No 201 is a 1300 square foot 2 bedroom condo in Bird Bay Village, built year also 1993. It has a “Just Value” \$162,800 that through homesteading exemptions is reduced to \$67,184. Here’s what the proposed fire fee does to the tax burden for this home:

Current Ad Valorem City Tax at 3.6mil	\$242.
2016 TRIM at 3.1 mil -to partially offset fire fee	\$198.
Fire Fee (Tier 1 and Tier 2 -on structure)	\$248.
Proposed Total Tax including Fire Fee	\$446
<u>Tax increase on this property</u>	<u>\$204. 84% increase</u>

I have other examples that would make the disparity even greater- There's one on Granada with a land value of \$419,000 whose "structure" is only assessed at \$80K. In that case, the "offset" will create something of a windfall for the owner - as the tax burden on this Island Home will be dramatically reduced by crediting back the high land values on the "offset".

This paints a picture that is hardly reasonable or equitable.

The new fire fee totally relies on the assessor's rolls **and** methodology. It's really an ad-valorem tax- it doesn't separate out the land (in many cases), and it doesn't expand the base. Its single virtue is that it uses an available collection method that is easy to employ.

I am well aware that the consultants will defend their boilerplate as "legal", "court tested" and "having precedents". But, every case is judged on the confines of its argument. You might want to research Burton and Associates (absorbed by Stantec) and learn what transpired in Cooper City, Florida. That one did not go so well. The courts have a way of eventually getting things right.

But, the best test is to ask yourselves if you think this fee is fair- or if you only think that it might be defensible. I believe that both are possible even in the face of more needed revenue.

Please add this objection to the public comments for your meeting on the 21st.

Thank You,

Thomas Brener

Mercedes Barcia

From: Jim Chiarella <jchiarella@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 15, 2017 4:18 PM
To: City Council
Subject: I am opposed to Special Fire Assessment

I am writing to make clear my objection to the attempt to create a Special Fire Assessment in place of the current budget process. By moving the cost of the fire services from the current budget process to a Special Assessment this becomes an automatic (and forever increasing) cost to the taxpayers that is not subject to review. I suspect that this is an attempt to remove the "unsustainable" pension costs from the budget to the taxpayers who have no say in the process. Moving unsustainable costs from one place to another does not make them sustainable.

I am also disappointed that this process is taking place while many winter residents are out of town.

James Chiarella
313 Reclinata Circle
Venice, FL 34292

Mercedes Barcia

From: Robert Daniels
Sent: Tuesday, August 15, 2017 6:20 PM
To: Edward Lavallee; Linda Senne; Shawn Carvey; Jeff Cripe; Frank Giddens; Historic Preservation Board; Economic Development Advisory Board
Subject: Fwd: Fire Tax Letter
Attachments: Fire Tax Opposition Letter.docx; ATT00001.htm

Fyi

Regards,
Councilman Bob Daniels
City Of Venice , Florida

Begin forwarded message:

From: Nina Christman <ninachristman@gmail.com>
Date: August 15, 2017 at 11:54:12 AM EDT
To: citycouncil@venicegov.com
Cc: Nina Christman <christmanpavement@gmail.com>
Subject: Fire Tax Letter

Please open, read and then post.

Need to Report an Issue? SeeClickFix Venice Connect is available as an app for Android and iPhone. Select SeeClickFix from your app store on your device and choose Venice, Florida. There is also a link to the program on the city's website, www.venicegov.com, or go directly to SeeClickFix at <http://www.seeclickfix.com/Venice>

PLEASE NOTE: This agency is a public entity and is subject to Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, concerning public records. Email communications are covered under such laws; therefore, email sent or received on this entity's computer system, including your email address, may be disclosed to the public and media upon request. If you do not want your email address released to a public records request, do not send electronic mail to this entity. Instead, contact this office by phone or in writing.

Fire Tax Opposition Letter

My husband and I own a home at 801 Laguna Drive in the City of Venice. We both vehemently oppose the fire tax you have proposed.

The reasons you outlined in your letter to the taxpayers in the city for the proposed fire dept tax is an outright lie.

We all know the reason for the fire tax is twofold.

First: The fire department pension is bankrupt due to gross pension fund miss management. In addition to that- allowing Fire Dept staff to retire at 45 and receive full pensions is an absolute outrage.

Second: The City and the council's gross misappropriation of the city budget and other funds is infuriating.

For Example:

- 1) The 11 million dollar Venice Performing Art Center- an outrageously irresponsible building that we did not need and does not attract performers and musicians.
- 2) The brick library you had demolished for mold. FYI- Bricks don't harbor mold and can be easily cleaned.
- 3) All the fancy New blue signs that the city has plastered all over the town for tourists pointing out beaches, downtown center, ect.
- 4) All the useless meaningless John Nolan historic signs on top of nearly every street sign.
- 5) All the fancy black lights that line the new expensive paved walk path in the middle of Venice Ave.

6) All the new city trucks, SUV's and other vehicles the city employees drive around town.

I could go on and on but what is the point. Your spending has been irresponsible and frivolous. Shame on you and your failure to serve the people who elected you. You clearly do not have a clue how to run the business of city government.

Nina and Mike Christman

Mercedes Barcia

From: Sandra Robinson <srobinsonjp@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 15, 2017 6:57 PM
To: City Council

I have a real concern about the future assessment for the fire dept. Many people at Villa Le Grand are on fixed incomes. This assessment is too much in too short of time. Please come up with another plan.
Sandra Robinson

Mercedes Barcia

From: Mike/Peg Tomanio <mtomanio@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, August 15, 2017 7:10 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Opposition to proposed "Fire Assessment"

Mayor and City Council of Venice:

Please add our names to the ever growing list of Venice City residents who are opposed to your "Fire Assessment". It is not an assessment, it is a TAX placed squarely on the backs of Venice City residents. As we are sure you have heard from many others, to hold your hearing in August appears to be an intentional move on the Council's part to slip this through while most residents are out of town.

As long time homeowners faced with tax increases every year, we must plan ahead and budget our finances to cover our future expenses. The City Council needs to do the same! This fire department situation didn't just appear. The problem was put in place some time ago and funds should have been set aside each and every year to cover the known upcoming expenses.

Please put the needs of your city residents ahead of your wants and do not slap yet another tax onto our backs. We already pay for fire services as part of our current tax bill. Please..... balance your budget by eliminating or postponing projects until you save the necessary funding to pay for them.

Sincerely,

Peg and Mike Tomanio

Mercedes Barcia

From: BarryandJean <barryandjeansmithies@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 15, 2017 8:14 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Fire fee

To whom it may concern,

I wish to protest the proposed "fire fee" intended to raise funds for the City of Venice Fire Department. This proposed cost to the homeowner will make it just too expensive to live in Venice. The impact of the fee is worsened by the fact that it is not tax deductible.

Sincerely,

Barry and Jean Smithies
821 Saintclare Circle,
Venice

Mercedes Barcia

From: Prudence Carlson <prudencecarlson@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 16, 2017 7:32 AM
To: City Council
Subject: Fire assessment

That is a bad idea. One time assessment might be more palatable to homeowners. Or fundraising as a means to raise money

Sent from my iPhone

Mercedes Barcia

From: Colleen Tyson <ctyson@nycap.rr.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 16, 2017 9:15 AM
To: City Council
Subject: Fire protection special assessments

To the Mayor all city council members,

As a home owner in the city of Venice I am opposed to the fire protection special assessment fee that we are all to assume! This is based on poor management and poor control on the city's funding department. I don't feel that we as tax payers should have to be responsible for this. We pay our taxes for funding the fire department and other public service departments. It's up to the city of Venice to manage the funding properly and to illicit control of expenditures for the departments which they have not been doing.

Why have the the home owners in Venice never voted on the budget for the fire department in the past? Now you want us to pick up the tab! This is totally unacceptable and I am opposed to the fire assessment fee!

If the fire assessment fee should pass it's not just the homeowners of the city of Venice that should be responsible for paying this fee. It should be a fee that whomever is provided service from the fire department should be assessed, including those that you stated were exempt i.e.: property owned by governmental entities.

Sincerely

Colleen Tyson
144 Kayaderosseras Dr
Ballston Spa, Ny 12020

Venice property owner:
617 Cornwell on the Gulf
Venice, FL 34285

August 16, 2017

Dear Mayor Kelly,

Please keep the Venice Fire Department under the City of Venice control.

We already ceded the Venice Police Department to Sarasota. which has impeded rapid and easy access to our police department.

It's a mistake to "farm out" another of our civic responsibilities.

An off-area center will not serve our community as well as in-house organization and employees.

If we keep eliminating city of Venice services, we'll just become a city run by outsiders, another neighborhood area of Sarasota.

Yours truly

Joy E. Van Buskirk

Joy E. Van Buskirk
608 Menendez Street
Venice, Florida 34285

Mercedes Barcia

From: cbtewks@gmail.com
Sent: Wednesday, August 16, 2017 9:55 AM
To: City Council
Subject: proposed Fire Protection Assessment

We are vehemently opposed to this assessment. Thank you for adding my opposition to this proposal.

Concerned Resident,

Robert Tewksbury
627 Marcus
Venice Fl

Sent from my iPhone

Mercedes Barcia

From: Margaret Short <rshort136@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, August 16, 2017 10:00 AM
To: City Council
Subject: Fire protection special assessments.

I am writing in reference to city of Venice parcel number 0407151073 located at 636 Leslie Ln. 73 Venice, FL 34285

I am 81 years old and find it very difficult to keep up with today's expenses in Venice. I am somewhat handicapped and live on a fixed income.

Having to pay for help at home and more help to be paid for in the very near future, there is no way financially that I can keep up!

When I moved here in 1991 it was a paradise to me and I did work several jobs while I was able so that I could remain here.

There are more and more snowbirds moving here every year and I understand the need for the assessment however I would hope you could look for alternative methods to raise the money that is needed!

Perhaps this assessment could be imposed on all newer construction that is being built to accommodate the people who are moving here!

Thank you for your service to our community!

Margaret Short

Sent from my iPhone

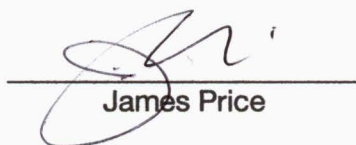
James and Kathy Price
513 Valencia Rd
Venice FI 34285

City of Venice
401 W Venice Ave
Venice FI 34285

Aug 7, 2017

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

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


James Price


Kathy Price

August 16, 2017

Ms Lori Stelzer, City Clerk
City Hall
Venice, FL 34285

Re: Objection to Adoption of the Fire Fee Proposal

Hello Lori,

Please include the following comments in the Record for the Public Hearing scheduled for August 21, 2017 on subject matter the following (please also provide copies of this letter to the Mayor and Council Members).

As a taxpayer in the City of Venice I respectfully request you **do not adopt the Fire Fee Proposal** on the basis that it will significantly increase the tax/fee burden and is not a cost-effective alternative for funding the Fire Department.

I see the proposal of one with 3 fatal flaws and a number of technical concerns that have already been brought to your attention.

The following issues which I consider as fatal flaws should be sufficient to withdraw the proposal as unacceptable and not appropriate at this time make:

- The timing is wrong as the bonding for debt service to cover the road and public safety projects will raise the millage rate from 0.1660 to 0.6780 (0.5120 mill increase which already absorbs the 0.5000 mill reduction being suggested as an adjustment for adoption of the Fire Fee)
- On the basis of a 2018 rate reduction from 3.6000 to 3.10000, plus the 0.6780 debt service, plus the equivalent of 1.1660 (millage conversion of \$4.2 million to be raised by the Fire Fee) results in an effective rate of 4.9440 against an effective rate of 3.7660 for 2017; 31% increase
- Compared to Fire Fees assessed at the County level, proposed Venice fees are way out of line (in 2016 the Fire Fee for a single family residence with an assessment of \$199,890 [exemption and cap] and a building value of \$179,700] was \$147.84; under the Venice concept the 100% fee would be \$524.89; a similar situation with an assessment of \$307,500 [no exemption or cap] and a building value of \$215,600 was \$201.60; under the Venice concept the 100% fee would be \$601.93)

The above issues should be sufficient to discourage the adoption of the Fire Fee proposal. Although transfer of these services to the County has been explored and dismissed, a re-visit of that concept may be appropriate.

In addition to the above, the following concerns which have already been raised by e-mails and letters to the City suggest the mechanics of implementation of the proposal require considerable refinement should the Fire Fee concept be pursued. Vetting by a Stakeholder Group as has been done under other City proposals should facilitate refinement of such a proposal:

- A similar proposal was presented several years ago and was soundly defeated
- The cost will double after the 1st year; this is a classic “Bait & Switch” approach which most find offensive.
- Loss of the “Homestead Exemption and Cap protection” when calculating the Fire Fee; unfair and unacceptable.

August 16, 2017

Objection to Adoption of the Fire Fee Proposal

Page 2

- In the 1st year, the Fire Department expenses will increase by \$1.8 million over the current budget (2017, \$7.6 million; 2018, \$9.4 million); out of control spending; the Fire Department must be held accountable.
- Shifting capital needs funding from a non ad valorem tax source (One Cent Sales Tax) to an ad valorem/Fire Fee source; bad idea
- The Report indicates that the Fire Fee concept will require an additional \$400,000 +/- in costs to administer the program.....unnecessary added burden.
- Of the 16,215 units included in the Tier 1 calculation, 7,500 +/- are single family units, 6,900 +/- are condo units, and 175 +/- are apartment buildings (the 175 building include roughly 1,100 units). Condo owners have reasonable cause to consider the Fire Fee calculations to be unfair; building values for a condo are distorted by addition of a share of common land/amenities; condo units have fire detection, suppression (sprinklers), and alarms which are not reflected in calculating Fire Fees; and the Tier 1 calculation favors single family units/apartment units and penalizes condo units (condo owners in one building are each assessed a Tier 1 fee; one condo building may have 28 units and thus 28 Tier 1 assessments; one apartment building may have 28 apartments, but only 1 Tier 1 assessment; and a single family unit has 1 Tier 1 assessment).
- The Mayor has gone on record stating the Fire Fee is designed to be tax burden neutral to the residential land owner (e-mail of 8/26/2017, 11:56:27 am). The suggested .5 mill reduction in the tax rate as an incentive to adopt is an insult to the intelligence of the taxpayer; a switch from one method to another should be beneficial, not an added cost burden. The 1st year projected revenue under the Fire Fee proposal (50% recovery) is \$4.2 million +/-; a 0.5 mill reduction in the City tax rate is \$1.8 million +/-; a difference of \$2.4 million +/-; \$2.4 million more to be paid by the taxpayer under the Fire Fee concept; NOT TAX BURDEN NEUTRAL.....deplorable.
- Although City is suggesting otherwise (check with your tax professional), the Fire Fee is most likely not tax deductible....be upfront
- The 24 Church parcels (which includes the Salvation Army) are exempt under the current concept but will be required to pay under the Fire Fee calculation; NO, NO, NO....they earned their exemption.....the only fire associated with a Church lies beyond the Gates of Hell and you will go there if you adopt this Fire Fee!

In summary, we the taxpayer, cannot afford the Fire Fee Plan which will add \$1.8 million to the Fire Department expenses; \$400,000 increased administration burden; and \$2.4 million added taxpayer expense to switch to the proposed system.

Thank you for considering these comments,

Regards,

Mike Rafferty
Resident, City of Venice

Mercedes Barcia

From: JWheelerIL@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, August 16, 2017 11:40 AM
To: City Council
Subject: Venice Fire Assesment

Dear Mayor Holic and council members,

As an owner of a condo at Capri West Condominium Association, **I want to express my displeasure with the proposed fire assessment.** I believe the City of Venice should continue their efforts to merge the City of Venice Fire Department with the Sarasota County Fire Department. It doesn't make sense to have two fire departments sitting side by side.

This consolidation should not be put in the "too tough pile", but, should be **accomplished.**

Sincerely,
James E & Judy M Wheeler
764 Village Circle, Unit #121
Venice, FL 34292
618-604-7314

Mercedes Barcia

From: John Moeckel <jcminfl@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 16, 2017 12:03 PM
To: City Council; Edward Lavallee
Subject: Re: Venice Fire Fee

Dear Mayor and City Council,

One very important thing I failed to mention is that I truly appreciate the efforts by all of you in addressing these issues. Its an extremely difficult situation and trying to come up workable solutions that the citizens would embrace. The can has been kicked down the road for a very long time. I applaud you and support the effort.

In the end the solution just has to be reasonable and agreeable to our citizens.

Best,

John Moeckel, Citizen of Venice.

On Monday, August 14, 2017, 8:38:04 PM PDT, John Moeckel <jcminfl@yahoo.com> wrote:

Dear Mayor Holic and City Council,

I'm troubled over the new Fire Fee program that the City is looking at. Earlier this year I attended a Fire Fee meeting where a decision was made to 50% Fire Fee funding. The discussion also included reducing the millage as to make this new process revenue neutral. At that time there was no discussion about the Fire Fee being tax deductible.

Now, we find out that the new program is not revenue neutral and the Fire Fee is not tax deductible.

The notice I received from the City, dated July 20, 2017 indicates a tax increase of \$281.51 on my property the first year and that could be doubled to \$563.00 by City Council. This is on top of a voter approved bond program. This is way too much of a tax increase at one time. The impact on many of our citizens who are on fixed incomes is unacceptable. Prices are increasing on so many every day things and this burden is just too much.

In addition to this program will the City also consider a "Police Fee Program" in the future?

I would request that City Council consider paring this back to a much lower tax increase and increase this funding slowly over time.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Best,

John Moeckel, Citizen of Venice.

Mercedes Barcia

From: Jeanne <jeannesooos@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, August 16, 2017 12:44 PM
To: City Council
Subject: fire assessment & concerns

Dear Mayor & Council Members,

I was unable to attend today's fire assessment meetings due to my work schedule. My husband and I moved to Venice in 1995. We bought a house, raised our family and opened a business. Our home and business are both located in the city. We use to consider ourselves middle class but with rising cost of food, health insurance.... we are finding it tough to make ends meet. We try to live within our means but it's getting harder and the fire assessment fee will be an added home and business expense we can't afford. The fire assessment fee will cause residential and commercial rents to increase. Due to the rising costs of owning a small business I fear that soon all the small Mom & Pop businesses will vanish from downtown Venice and the city limits. We decided against opening on the island due to the rising costs of rents and lack of parking. There will be no one to work at the restaurants, retail stores, car washes... because there is no working class housing available. We love Venice and planned on living our lives out here but not sure if that will be financially possible. It appears the only people who will be able to live in the city limits are the wealthy. Many I've spoken to think this is your plan. I hope not.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Soos

Mercedes Barcia

From: georgeromanowski@gmail.com
Sent: Wednesday, August 16, 2017 2:46 PM
To: City Council
Cc: Maria Goodwin; Phil Angell; Chuck Dare; Denise Majka; Barbara O'Grady
Subject: Information Session Re Fire Fee Assessment

Dear Mayor Holic,

Once again I am writing regarding this proposed assessment as the President of the Auburn Hammocks Owners Association. I, along with other members of our community, listened on line to the Info Session.

Please consider this as our response....

The information Session did nothing to dismiss any concerns regarding the fee or the process used to work with and include the community you were elected to serve.

What I heard, were excuses in the form of blaming previous administrators and council members, a lack of fiscal discipline if included in the general fund and fear over proposed tax decreases from the state.

Prior to retirement, I served as a school district superintendent. I can tell you, facing our community with such excuses would have meant I should be looking elsewhere for a position.

Fear regarding potential tax decreases is no way to govern. As I am sure you know, tax decreases rarely materialize.

As a government official, you take what is on your plate and make the best decisions for those you represent.

I heard several good ideas proposed by the community. The response was, it would take too much time to change course. That tells me the council has already decided this is the way to go.

I understand three of the five council members and yourself are on their third terms. That leaves me to question who you would blame for this lack of planning. It appears to be those in power now, except for the two new members.

Stating that this designated fee protects the fire department from future recessions is ridiculous. A fiscal reality we all face when there is a downturn in the economy is to look at all expenditures and making necessary cuts. Yes, sometimes you eliminate positions and sometimes you don't add new positions. That is a reality! Protecting only the fire department from reality while eliminating the federal tax benefit for homeowners is irresponsible.

In conclusion, what you are doing is wrong and poorly planned on so many levels it would take a dissertation to outline it all.

I did not hear any votes of support from those asking questions at today's meeting. That should speak volumes. Our only response at this point is to make our voices heard in the voting booths.

George Romanowski
Sent from my iPhone

Mercedes Barcia

From: Bill Wright <wwright@atlanticbb.net>
Sent: Wednesday, August 16, 2017 3:41 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Fire Assessment

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

Please reconsider this Assessment as it will become another tax burden to those who are not permanent residents but winter in Venice. Also, The Special Fire Assessment is not tax burden neutral as the city claims, even with the millage rate decrease of 0.5000, since this Assessment is not an eligible deduction on our federal income tax. That means, we will have a significant increase in taxes/assessments while our federal tax deduction will be significantly decreased.

Sincerely yours,
William J. Wright

Property owner and part time resident.
320 Reclinata Circle
Venice Fl. 34292

August 21, 2017

Ms. Lori Stelzer, City Clerk
City Hall
Venice, FL 34285

Re: Objection to Adoption of the Fire Fee Proposal

Hello Lori,

Please read into the Record for the Public Hearing scheduled for August 21, 2017 on subject matter the following (please also provide copies of this letter to the Mayor and Council Members at the Hearing).

We, the undersigned, as taxpayers in the City of Venice, respectfully request you **do not adopt the Fire Fee Proposal** on the basis that it will significantly increase the tax/fee burden and is not a cost-effective alternative for funding the Fire Department.

Please consider the following as a basis for this request:

- A similar proposal was presented several years ago and was soundly defeated
- My notice showed my cost will double after the 1st year; this is a classic "Bait & Switch" approach which is offensive.
- I will lose my "Homestead Exemption and Cap protection" when calculating the Fire Fee; unfair and unacceptable.
- In the 1st year, the Fire Department expenses will increase by \$1.8 million over the current budget (2017, \$7.6 million; 2018, \$9.4 million); out of control spending; the Fire Department must be held accountable.
- The Report indicates that the Fire Fee concept will require an additional \$400,000 +/- in costs to administer the program.....unnecessary added burden.
- The suggested .5 mill reduction in the tax rate as an incentive to adopt is an insult to the intelligence of the taxpayer; a switch from one method to another should be beneficial, not an added cost burden. The 1st year projected revenue under the Fire Fee proposal (50% recovery) is \$4.2 million +/-; a 0.5 mill reduction in the City tax rate is \$1.8 million +/-; a difference of \$2.4 million +/-; \$2.4 million more to be paid by the taxpayer under the Fire Fee concept; deplorable.
- The 24 Church parcels (which includes the Salvation Army) are exempt under the current concept but will be required to pay under the Fire Fee calculation; NO, NO, NO....they earned their exemption.....the only fire associated with a Church lies beyond the Gates of Hell and you will go there if you adopt this Fire Fee!

In summary, we the taxpayers, cannot afford the Fire Fee Plan which will add \$1.8 million to the Fire Department expenses; \$400,000 increased administration burden; and \$2.4 million added taxpayer expense to switch to the proposed system.

Thank you for considering these comments,

Regards,

Amy McEnaney
Dara & John Carberg

303

Reclinata Cir, Venice, FL 34285

307

Reclinata Cir, Venice, FL 34285

[illegible]

Mercedes Barcia

From: Joe Welch
Sent: Wednesday, August 16, 2017 4:00 PM
To: City Council
Subject: FW: St. Andrews Professional Park - Fire Protection Special Assessment
Attachments: Letter to Venice 8-15-2017.pdf

All-

This email came to me. The gentleman wants me to include it with the other emails you are receiving regarding the fire assessment.

Joe

From: Russ Winget [mailto:RWinget@ar-global.com]
Sent: Tuesday, August 15, 2017 5:05 PM
To: Joe Welch <JWelch@Venicegov.com>
Subject: St. Andrews Professional Park - Fire Protection Special Assessment

Joe – Thank you very much for making yourself available to discuss the Fire Protection Special Assessment with me last week. At your invitation I have put my thoughts to paper to be shared with the council and the public. Our company, as owners of the Professional Park are strongly opposed to the creation of the special assessment and firmly believe it is not in the best interest of the resident taxpayers and the community. Please forward the attached letter to the council and others stakeholders.

Thanks again. Sincerely

Russ Winget


HEALTHCARE TRUST INC
Russ Winget
Property Manager
T: (704) 626-4407
RWinget@ar-global.com

| Charlotte, NC 28226 | <http://www.healthcaretrustinc.com>

DISCLAIMER: This message may be privileged and confidential. Use of this information by anyone other than the intended recipient is prohibited. While information contained herein pertaining to the fund has been obtained from sources believed to be reliable, its accuracy and completeness cannot be guaranteed. Accordingly, no representation or warranty, express or implied, is made as to, and no reliance should be placed on the fairness, accuracy, or completeness of such information in this email. Consequently, Healthcare Trust Inc assumes no liability for the accompanying information, which is being provided to you solely for evaluation and general information and is not to be interpreted as an endorsement of any investment, or personal investment advice. A

prospectus of the fund will be provided on request. Past performance is not necessarily an indication of future performance.

Need to Report an Issue? SeeClickFix Venice Connect is available as an app for Android and iPhone. Select SeeClickFix from your app store on your device and choose Venice, Florida. There is also a link to the program on the city's website, www.venicegov.com, or go directly to SeeClickFix at <http://www.seeclickfix.com/Venice>

PLEASE NOTE: This agency is a public entity and is subject to Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, concerning public records. Email communications are covered under such laws; therefore, email sent or received on this entity's computer system, including your email address, may be disclosed to the public and media upon request. If you do not want your email address released to a public records request, do not send electronic mail to this entity. Instead, contact this office by phone or in writing.



HEALTHCARE TRUST INC

405 Park Avenue, 15th Floor, New York, NY 10022

T: (212) 415-6500 F: (212) 421-5799

WWW.AMERICANREALTYCAP.COM

City Council of Venice Florida:

Healthcare Trust, Inc. is the owner of the St. Andrews Medical Park encompassing approximately 60,200 square feet of medical space including a surgical center and an imaging center. We have received your recent notice regarding the proposed Fire Protection Special Assessment as a method of funding fire services in the city. We strongly oppose this method of funding as it has many negative and chilling effects on businesses such as ours and other negative impacts on the community as a whole.

Healthcare Trust, Inc. Property Profiles

Saint Andrews Medical Park - Venice FL



Saint Andrews Medical Park - Venice FL
1350, 1360 and 1370 E. Venice Avenue Venice, FL 34292

Date Purchased: 05/30/14

Property Information

Square Footage: 60,203

Year Built: 1997

Tenancy Type: Multi-Tenant

Property Type: MOB (Off-Campus)

his form of funding creates a new bureaucracy between the city and the taxpayer and once built is almost certain to grow in size and stature taking on a life of its own. As stated in the notice, the assessment will include added administrative expenses, costs to the county for collection and a new taxpayer liability to the municipal government that could lead to foreclosure for non-payment. The ability for council and city management to guide it will be diminished over time as its constituents demand more and more from the standalone funding source. There will be less incentive to spend money efficiently when given an independent source of funding such as this.

The notice states that the fund will generate approx. \$4,200,000 and that St. Andrew's share of that is approx. \$9,525.00 in 2018 and \$19,091.00 after 2018. That would mean our one property would be shouldering .224% of the total \$4.2mm in 2018 and a full .449% in 2019 and beyond. That is a huge share of the total burden placed one property.



HEALTHCARE TRUST INC

405 Park Avenue, 15th Floor, New York, NY 10022

T: (212) 415-6500 F: (212) 421-5799

WWW.AMERICANREALTYCAP.COM

Our company owns Healthcare properties coast to coast. From our vantage point, the best model for funding fire-life services is the "Call for Service" model that places the burden for paying on the heaviest users of services. The largest users are assisted living centers and skilled nursing homes that are frequent users of ambulance services. We know from experience that in many communities a firetruck and ambulance together can make 3-5 trips per week to some nursing homes. The expense for these trips is best paid for by the users. The city budget states that the Venice's fire department responded to 3,300 calls in 2016. This equals 9 calls per day, 3 calls per station. The city of Venice is not burning, it's having medical emergencies.

Enterprise Zones exist to spur growth based on tax abatements or other economic incentives from government bodies. Conversely, an anti-enterprise zone is where added costs and burdens discourage the formation of business and cause existing businesses to flee. In states like Illinois, Pennsylvania and Ohio, taxing authorities are raising taxes on our properties with seemingly no regard for possible consequences. With each increase, our appetite for renewed investment decreases and our property values decrease as well. Tenants are forced to pay higher and higher costs with no net benefit. Ultimately, our tenants pass along the costs and their customary margins on those costs right back to the people of the community thus increasing the cost to taxpayers had they paid directly.

Healthcare Trust likes investing in Florida and owns 14 properties purchased for approximately \$356,000,000. Florida is home to approximately 15% of our total holdings and we enjoy the business friendly environment in Florida. We hope that continues to be the case in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Russ Winget'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Russ' being more prominent than the last name 'Winget'.

Russ Winget

Property Manager

St. Andrews Professional Plaza

Mercedes Barcia

From: Joanne Choy <jochoy4@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 16, 2017 7:36 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Re: Fire Assessment

August 16, 2017

City of Venice
401 W Venice Avenue
Venice, Florida 34285

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing AGAIN in response to the Fire Protection Special Assessment Letter notifying me of the Public Hearing (Parcel No. 0407111030).

I attended today's public meeting on the fire assessment. Thank you for taking the time to provide additional information. I heard several citizens comment that fire safety funding is critical to Venice. However, I also heard many question the approach and methodology in ensuring funding.

After hearing the additional information, I have the following additional comments:

1) I still believe that the taxes that were previously collected and directed to fire safety should be rebated to taxpayers based on whatever portion of those funds are now collected via the fire assessment. This rebate should be done as a further reduction in the millage rate to lessen the impact to taxpayers.

2) I applaud the city council and others looking closely at the assessment to condo owners since it was pointed out that the rate is not fair when compared with single residences. I happen to live in Bella Costa. While we are owners of our respective condos and of some of the land that Bella Costa sits on, we lease a portion of our land from the developer; via a 99 year lease. I hope that we are not assessed taxes or assessments on land we don't own.

3) With a millage rate reduction to 3.6 and in considering the debt service plus the millage conversion of \$4.2 million raised by the Fire Assessment, are we not actually increasing the millage rate to approximately 3.7660; a 31% increase?

4) how does the methodology used by the City of Venice in calculating the fire assessment compare with the towns and cities (Sarasota, North Port, Englewood) mentioned at the meeting? As I understand, the subject cities impose significantly less to homeowners. Thus, I would recommend a second look at the methodology used to calculate the per home assessment.

5) I am very concerned about the \$920,000+ cost to administer and collect the assessment when the city currently pays less than \$378,000. This is an increase of over \$500,000.

Sincerely,

Joanne K. Choy
230 Santa Maria Street, #135
Venice, FL 34285

On Fri, Aug 11, 2017 at 10:56 PM, Joanne Choy <jochoy4@gmail.com> wrote:

City of Venice
401 W Venice Avenue
Venice, Florida 34285

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing in response to the Fire Protection Special Assessment Letter notifying me of the Public Hearing (Parcel No. 0407111030).

Fire Protection is critical to our community. However, I object to this approach for the following reasons:

1) the assessment is not tax deductible, therefore, I urge the Council to keep the fire protection funds in the general funds;

2) the city proposes a partial rebate of our operating millage rate. We are already seeing an increase in our bills because of the debt service for the \$16 million public safety bond and \$18 million road bond. The additional annual increase of \$315 for the Fire Protection Assessment means a sizable increase in my overall tax bill. Therefore, if the assessment is implemented, the full amount passed on in the fire assessment should be rebated in our millage rate rather than keeping those funds for "needed projects" which were not communicated to taxpayers;

3) the next FY budget for fire protection appears to increase from \$6,551,574 two years ago, from \$7,701,000 this year to approximately \$9,429,638 next year. There is no explanation for the significant increase;

4) the Council indicates, with this initial notification, that the fire assessment fee may double in FY19; without full rebate in our millage rate. I strongly urge the Council to reduce our millage rate dollar for dollar if the assessment is implemented;

5) The letter refers to expenses incurred by the City in administering and collecting the assessment and statutory discounts through employing efficiencies of collecting the assessments annually via property taxes. However, the details were not communicated fully in the letter. From my online review, it appears there are savings and significant administrative costs. The household implication for expenses and the anticipated discounts should be clearly communicated to taxpayers;

6) We received the letter August 2nd after being out of town. I object to a requirement to submit any comments within 20 days (business or calendar) of the letter date of July 20, 2017. This date occurs before three public meetings being held for taxpayer questions (2 on 8/16 and 1 on 8/21). At a minimum, taxpayers

should have been given a deadline after the 8/21 meeting. I discovered the 8/16 meeting date through social media; not notification from the City of Venice.

Sincerely,

Joanne K. Choy
230 Santa Maria Street, #135
Venice, FL 34285

Mercedes Barcia

From: John Hassell <john.m.hassell@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 16, 2017 8:30 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Proposed Fire Assessment Fee
Attachments: Letter 2nd to City Council regarding Fire Protection Special Assessment.docx

Please see the attached letter regarding the proposed fire assessment fee. John Hassell

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

August 16, 2017

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

Dear Venice Council.

We commend the city for holding the meetings and for the attendance of the Mayor, City Council Members, City Staff, and Fire Chief, whose presentation was informative.

We have some observations from the meeting.

- The Venice City Council recognizes the need to change its budget process; to begin providing additional revenue each year to fund reserves for capital replacement.
- Current property taxes do not provide sufficient revenue to facilitate budget reforms.
- To raise revenue, the city is considering a fire assessment fee. That fee would generate about \$4.21 million, which would be offset partially by a reduction in millage for property taxes of about \$1.8 million.
- It seems to us that the arguments for a fire protection fee could be extended to include a police protection fee, a city parks upkeep fee, etc. to provide dedicated funding for specific services.
- Many of the speakers seem to believe that the proposed fire protection fee is disingenuous, meant to raise revenues without raising taxes. We do not concur with that view; rather, we believe that the City Council is honestly trying to find a way to institute budget reforms to increase revenues to begin providing reserves for future capital needs.
- Based upon comments received, the City has recognized that the Tier I and II process may be unfair to condominium owners.

We believe that a better public policy is to increase the millage fee appropriately to support the budget reforms needed by the city. Therefore, we oppose instituting a fire protection fee and advocate raising (not lowering) the millage rate to provided revenues to fund city services.

One comment at the meeting and in the July letter to property owners was that a fire protection fee is a way to have tax-exempt organizations, which benefit from fire department services but do not pay property taxes, pay some amount for services received. The controller indicated in response to our question that the amount assessed to the tax-exempt organizations would be about \$90,000 of the \$4.21 million, about 2.14% of the proposed fee. If the city has not done so, then we believe the tax-exempt organizations should be asked to pay a voluntary fee in lieu of property taxes. Many cities, especially those in college towns, have succeeded in doing so, if necessary, by publicly shaming the tax-exempt organizations for their free-rider activity.

In closing, we commend the City Council and staff for recognizing the need to change the budgetary process, particularly in providing additional reserves for capital project needs. We believe those needs should be met by general property taxes and the 1% dedicated sales tax.

Sincerely,

Barbara Hassell

John Hassell

Peter Simmons

From: Peter Simmons [pwsimmonsjr@verizon.net]
Sent: Saturday, August 05, 2017 3:35 PM
To: 'Ronald Dupont Jr.'
Cc: 'Greg Giles'
Subject: Fire Protection Special Assessment

Ronald DuPont Jr.
 Editor, Venice Gondolier Sun
 200 West Venice Ave.
 Venice Florida
 rdupont@VeniceGondolier.com

Dear Mr. DuPont,

In a previous email message to you, you asked if I wanted my message to be a letter to the Editor, at that time I declined so I could learn more about the Fire Protection Special Assessment. Now that I have seen the televised ABC news story on the assessment and have read the Gondolier's opinion article, I can now submit my following letter to the Gondolier Editor to you. If you decide to publish my letter and feel the need to edit my letter, I would appreciate the opportunity to approve your edited version before it goes out under my name.

Letter To The Editor

To set the stage, I need to mention both the ABC televised news report on the Fire Assessment and the Gondolier's opinion article in their Saturday August 5th paper. The ABC televised news story primarily focused on two ideas; first, firehouse 1 on the island is in serious disrepair and has been for years because there are no funds in the budget to make the necessary repairs. In fact a hole in the roof has gone unfixed for at least 2 years. Second, the lack of funds was due to the lack of revenue during the recession several years ago.

As for the Gondolier article, I have to disagree about the City Council's and Mayor's open communications to the residents of Venice. The Gondolier may have printed 18 stories concerning the Fire Assessment but not all Venice residents read the Gondolier. If the City Council and Mayor had spent half the time writing about the Fire Assessment in the monthly news letter sent with our water bill as was written about the water backflow valve situation....every Venice resident would have been informed and up to date as to what had transpired to date.

Our City Council and Mayor appear to be tone deaf as to the general trend of the American public which is calling for smaller government, less intrusive government and lower taxes. In my working days, if I asked my board of director for additional corporate funding of 69.77% for the business I managed, I'd be without a job.

As for this Fire Assessment, it will be a year after year assessment similar to any annual tax. Yes, the first year will be half maximum rate, of the following years. This Fire Assessment at the maximum rate will cost me \$746.38 per year which represents a 69.77 % increase over my current Venice City taxes I paid last year. In an email from our Mayor he told me, "The Fire Fee is designed to be tax burden neutral to the residential land owner, however, may need tweeting [SIC] in years 2 and 3." Even if the millage rate is dropped to 3.1 from 3.6 for the City of Venice, this change will only save me \$142.03 on last year's taxes. I would like to hear from the Mayor and City Council on how this will be revenue neutral.

Where is the City's reserve fund for major maintenance? If we do not have a reserve, then shame on our city leaders. If we had a Fire reserve but it was spent on other item, then shame on our city management. Is there truth in that our

city leaders have discussed the possibility of establishing another assessment for the police department sometime in the future?

The ABC televised report said the recession caused the lack of funds, but I did not see any reduction in the amount of City taxes I paid, so the home owner continued to fully fund our share. Maybe sales tax fell because of the recession and perhaps an additional sales tax and an additional motel/condo rental tax should be implemented instead of placing the burden on Venice residents for the Fire Assessment.

One of the main underlining problems revolves around the residential and commercial growth our City Council and Mayors have allowed to take place within Venice. Developers may pay for some of the infrastructure costs when developing land but there is also the need for expanded city services, new roads and others costs that are being passed through to the residents. It is no surprise that our city leaders play to the merchants and businesses when addressing growth. Our City Leaders want their kingdom to grow and merchants and businesses want the population density of Venice to be as high as possible to improve their profits. The cost of this growth is being put on the backs of the residents. New housing developments lower the value of our home. If growth is unchecked, Venice Ave might be the Bee Ridge Ave of Venice. It is time for our tax dollars to be spent on essential services and not on non-essential services such as Sarasota county's \$10,000 grants that are available to private gated subdivisions for entrance beautification.

It is time for our city leaders to listen to the residents and take a more conservative approach in managing tax revenues and the growth within the City of Venice. Significantly slow the development, stop rezoning farm land into residential and commercial land. Do not annex additional land into the city. There are many areas where our city leaders can impede growth.

We are losing our small village by the sea charm.

Pete Simmons
Venice FL

Mercedes Barcia

From: ronald courtney <ronclaire5@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 17, 2017 9:38 AM
To: City Council
Subject: Fire Assesment

Mayor and City Council

There is a popular statement that "Your crisis is not my emergency". The recent issue that has developed over the fire department funding is a example.

At a recent meeting a HOA representative stated that it was hard to understand how a bond issue to resurface roads was presented last year to the voters while there was no information on the seriousness of the underfunding for the fire department. This was after a lengthy period of discussion with the county over transfer of the department which failed due to disagreements on the money needed for the county to upgrade the equipment. Now residents have been confronted with a city crisis and are asked to accept an emergency with their finances to support a substantial additional increase in their taxes without full knowledge on their mileage rate for the general fund.

If we are to maintain a city fire department the residents must understand the need to provide the appropriate level of funds to sustain a high quality and professional unit. The city must stand behind the decision to find an additional source of revenue to achieve this result. I believe that the majority of citizens clearly are in support of this premise. Yet it must fully understand the emotional reaction that such a proposal may have on a community that whether it is right or wrong fundamentally judges government on the increase or decrease in their tax bill. While invention may be the mother of necessity the art of a compromise is the road to success. My compromise proposal is similar to a previous suggestion concerning specific long range capital expenditure spread over several years rather than in one year increments. That this new assessment fee be implemented over a three year period by percentage building up to 100 percent. This while not allowing a full impact will require the city to adjust for two years their general fund allocations without a mileage increase yet will provide the city in the end what it desires. In addition this would allow residents and businesses to plan for adjustments to their financial budgets for a gradual increase in their tax payments. The city should strongly evaluate the potential for achieving gradual success over a short period or face the prospect of immediate total rejection of what is fundamentally a sound idea. Hopefully this will in the end result in more AWE for the our community with our fire department and less SHOCK and distraction over our tax bill.

Ronald Courtney
435 Otter Creek
Venice
941 484 2062

Mercedes Barcia

From: Savitanza@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, August 17, 2017 11:21 AM
To: City Council
Subject: Fire Assessment program

Attention LINDA SENNE, FIN. DIRECTOR

This is to voice my objection to the proposed Fire Protection Special Assessment and to express my following concerns:

- 1 The proposal is a yearly assessment and not special as indicated.
- 2 If needed Funding should be part of the yearly budget and accumulated and disbursed through the tax base. The amount reflects significant and unfair percentage increase.
- 3 An August 21st hearing date is inconvenient to most owners.
- 4 Attempts should be made to lower Fire Costs.
 - a. Fewer vehicles responding.
 - b. Fewer employers during the April to December months
- 5 Incorrect information concerning the parcel at 995 Laguna Drive should be corrected - Tier 2 should reflect 56 Units and NOT 34 Units. This should lower the proposed assessment in both Tiers as the division would be increased.

I am opposed to the proposed Fire Protection Special Assessment.

Sincerely,

Salvatore and Dolores Vitanza
995 Laguna Drive, #107
Venice, FL 34285