

Commissioners and Mayor Bakken,

I am a homeowner and have lived in Bismarck for a long time and I am very concerned about how our taxes continue to go up outdistancing even my wage increases and revenue sources in the private sector. Listening to meetings from earlier in the year there was a lot of talk about how valuation of many properties will be less than what the city anticipated, but; low and behold now most people see an increase in their taxes because valuations came in higher. It's hard not to assume that this was an arbitrary increase to off-set some of your shortfalls you talk about in relation to other sources of income that you share at meetings like sales tax and fees.

As far as the proposed 30% increase in taxes I have questions for our Mayor specifically. When you ran for election you told us you were a fiscal-hawk and you would find efficiencies in local government spending to benefit the taxpayer. You said you voted down budgets the previous two years because you did not like the methodology justifying those budgets and you were out voted both times. This year you voted for the 30% increase stating that you for the first time agreed with the methodology. In listening to the meetings, the only methodology presented was a Condry report adopted in 2015 that only did a study on dollars earned by city employees and did not include benefits, vacation, or sick leave. You were elected in 2016. So I ask you Mayor are you lying to us in regards to what you promised the voters or is there methodology you have in closed door meetings that justifies what you said. Right now it just comes across that the taxpayer like myself are getting the shaft.

Good Evening,

Mike Connelly