

ROBIN L. FISHER, Commissioner, District 1
400 South Street, First Floor, Ste. 1-A
Titusville, FL 32780-7698
E-mail: robin.fisher@brevardcounty.us

Telephone: (321) 264-6750
Fax: (321) 264-6751

August 18, 2011

Citizens of Brevard County,

You recently received a letter from Commissioner Trudie Infantini that contained a number of inaccurate and misleading statements about your property taxes. The Board of County Commissioners has authorized me to send this letter to advise you of the real facts.

First, Mrs. Infantini inaccurately implies that a tax rate increase will result in an automatic tax bill increase for you. The implication is wrong as it is a fact that 88.4% of commercial properties and 76.2% of residential properties will see a decrease in their taxable values.

Mrs. Infantini inaccurately states that the Board of County Commissioners and the County Manager in making his budget proposal are violating the will of the people who voted for the "Save Our Homes Benefit." She again attempts to confuse you by implying that the Board and/or the county Manager has caused an increase in the "Assessed Value" of your property. The fact of the matter is that neither the Board nor the County Manager has any control over how the Property Appraiser determines the value of your property.

Mrs. Infantini inaccurately states that "many" assessed values have increased and then she implies that you can just add a 3% assessed value increase to the percentage change in the tax rate and determine what the increase will be in your tax bill. It is alarming to the Board that after weeks of budget discussions, Mrs. Infantini does not realize that this year, the increase in your assessed value is limited to 1.5% not 3% if you have a homesteaded property with the Save Our Homes benefit.

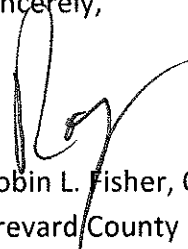
The Florida property tax system is extremely complex and cannot be explained in this short letter, but very simply your tax bill depends on two factors; the assessed value of your property, which is controlled by the Property Appraiser, and the tax rate which is set by the Board of

County Commissioners for Board taxes. Contrary to what Mrs. Infantini alleged in her letter, it is a fact that the majority of property owners will have a significant decrease in their assessed and taxable values and will therefore receive a tax bill decrease from the Board of County Commissioners.

Mrs. Infantini ends her letter by advising you that included in the budget proposal are modest pay increases for County employees. I have attached a transcript of Sheriff Jack Parker's comments on why it is important to provide this increase to the law enforcement officers, firefighters, and other dedicated county employees. The Sheriff does an excellent job in explaining why it is important to do so. Lastly, Mrs. Infantini states that the County is building an 18,000 square foot community Center at Wickham Park and does not have the funds to operate the existing centers. Both those statements are untrue.

Over the last four years Commissioners Nelson, Bolin, and I by voting on approval of the County's Annual Budgets have reduced the County Budget by \$310 million, eliminated hundreds of positions, and reduced the property taxes by over \$50 million. The majority of the Board is working very hard to ensure that your taxes are utilized as efficiently as possible and in the manner voted upon by the Brevard taxpayers. We will continue to rise above the rhetoric and do all we can to ensure that Brevard County is one of the best places in the world to live, work, and play.

Sincerely,



Robin L. Fisher, Chairman
Brevard County Board of County Commissioners

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
BREVARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

9:00 AM

The Board of County Commissioners of Brevard County, Florida, met in workshop session on July 20, 2011 at 9:00 AM in the Government Center Florida Room, Building C, 2725 Judge Fran Jamieson Way, Viera, Florida.

Page 1

Call to Order

9:00 AM Meeting called to order on July 20, 2011 at Florida Room, Florida Room, Viera, FL.

Attendee Name Title Status Arrived

Robin Fisher Chairman / Commissioner District 1 Present
Chuck Nelson Commissioner District 2 Present
Trudie Infantini Commissioner District 3 Present
Mary Bolin Commissioner District 4 Present
Andy Anderson Vice Chairman / Commissioner District 5 Present

ITEM III.B. BUDGET PRESENTATION BY BREVARD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE, J.R. "JACK" PARKER

...

Jack Parker, Brevard County Sheriff, stated for almost two decades he has been coming to this room to discuss budgets and the desire for everyone to do more with less; the BCSO and the County have consistently discussed through the years that government should operate more like successful businesses do in the private sector; when things get financially tough for private companies they eliminate efficiencies by laying off less essential employees and closing down less productive divisions; but that is just part of the story, as companies also put a tremendous effort in caring for and seeing to the needs of their remaining employees. He stated private companies know their most important resource is not their computer system, it is not their equipment, it is not their facilities, it is their people; companies know more than anything else that their company depends on their employees; and government can learn by continuing to look at the private sector. He stated while government has to make every effort to eliminate unnecessary services and unproductive workers, it must hold its remaining employees in high regard, just as its private sector counterparts do; government cannot continue to put its head in the sand and have an ouremployees- are-lucky-to-have-a-job-philosophy; and if it does, the only thing that will be faster than the rate at which exceptional employees is lost, will be the decline in the quality of services provided.... He stated in the private sector, the loss of an experienced, dedicated employee is a big deal that affects the bottom line; but in the public sector there seems to be much less desire, or interest, in retaining public employees; and he would suggest that although the loss of a public servant may be harder to quantify because government is not evaluated by profit margins, it is equally impacting. He stated in order to ensure success, government must invest in its employees and its future; the best thing he can do as Sheriff is to lead a quality Sheriff's Office that ensures the safety of the citizens while spending as little of their money as possible to do it;... He expressed appreciation to the Board for the opportunity to speak to the Board....