



Worthington Residents to Decide Income Tax Issue May 4, 2010 ~ Special Insert Inside Village Talks Newsletter

On May 4, 2010, Worthington voters will decide whether to approve an income tax increase from 2.0% to 2.5% in the City of Worthington.

The City of Worthington has seen a decrease in income tax and other major revenues. With the majority of its revenue derived from income taxes, economic setbacks like job loss or payroll deductions in Worthington mean less revenue for the City to operate its quality programs and services, and maintain infrastructure. Over the past 10 years, the City has made a number of reductions in spending that amount to over \$1.2 million annually, but financial projections show that the City will need an additional \$3.5 million in revenue annually to operate and maintain current service levels.

In order to maintain services, the City is asking voters to decide whether to approve an income tax increase from 2.0% to 2.5% in the City of Worthington. If approved, the additional income tax revenue will allow the City to:

- Maintain current levels of services provided to Worthington residents (such as snow removal, police and fire protection, recreational programs and

trash, recycling and yard waste collection.)

- Keep the City's infrastructure in good condition (such as roads, sewers and City facilities.)
- Enhance efforts to bring more jobs into Worthington.

Worthington residents who receive Social Security, company pensions, dividends and interest income would not be impacted and are exempt. In addition, 41% of Worthington wage earners already pay 2.5% if they work in Columbus or another municipality with a higher income tax. Worthington residents employed in Worthington or other communities currently at 2.0% will pay an additional \$250 per year per \$50,000 of income.

Inside this edition of the Village Talks, you will find a Fact Sheet that outlines more information about the income tax issue and explains what it means to you.

More information is also available online at www.worthington.org. Questions may be directed by email to incometax@ci.worthington.oh.us or you may call (614) 436-3100 for more information.

Income Tax Informational Public Forums

A series of Informational Public Forums are scheduled for residents to come and learn more about the issue, the financial condition of the City and to ask questions.

The forums are scheduled as follows:

Thursday, April 1st 7:30 p.m.-
Worthington Griswold Center
777 High Street

Thursday, April 8th 7:30 p.m.-
Worthington Community Center
345 E. Wilson Bridge Rd.

Tuesday, April 13th 7:30 p.m.-
Beth Tikvah
6121 Olentangy River Rd.



2010 Census

10 Questions in 10 minutes - Help Worthington be Counted

All Worthington households, along with every other household across the United States, are being asked to complete the 2010 Census form mailed or hand delivered to their home this March. The 2010 Census will document the changes in our nation since the last decennial census in 2000, and tell us how we've evolved as a country. Because census data affects how more than \$400-billion in federal funding is distributed to state and local governments, the census also will frame the future of our country and our community for the next 10 years. A complete and accurate count of the people in the City of Worthington will help ensure that we receive our share of federal dollars and representation in government.

Here's what you should know about the 2010 Census:

It's easy. One of the shortest census forms in history, the 2010 Census form asks 10 questions and takes about 10 minutes to complete. The individual in whose name the housing unit is rented or owned should complete the form on behalf of every person living there, both relatives and non-relatives.



It's important. Census data are used to reapportion seats in Congress and ensure proper district representation in state and local governments. Information from the census helps determine locations for child-care and senior centers, new roads, hospitals, schools and community centers.

It's safe. By law, the U.S. Census Bureau cannot share respondents' answers with anyone, including other federal agencies and law enforcement entities. All Census Bureau employees take an oath of nondisclosure and are sworn for life to protect the confidentiality of the data. The penalty for unlawful disclosure is a fine of up to \$250,000 or imprisonment of up to five years, or both. Finally, the most efficient way to respond to the 2010 Census is to complete the form as soon as it arrives and return it in the postage-paid return envelope. Census workers will visit households that do not return forms to take the count in person.

For more information about the 2010 Census and the "Take 10" initiative, visit 2010census.gov.

Joint Venture Brings New Business to Worthington

The City of Worthington is pleased to welcome a new company to the Worthington business community. The Bishoff Financial Group, a financial services firm, is relocating in the City of Worthington thanks to a joint venture with Worthington business Whalen & Company. Whalen & Company offers accounting services and often teams up with Bishoff Financial Group to assist clients seeking advice in managing their investments. The Bishoff Financial Group will locate in 250 W. Old Wilson Bridge Road, in offices adjacent to Whalen & Company. "We would like to welcome the Bishoff Financial Group to Worthington and thank Whalen & Company for their loyalty to the Worthington community and their commitment to helping attract more business to Worthington," said Worthington City Manager Matt Greeson. The Bishoff Financial Group offers securities through LPL Financial, one of the nation's largest independent broker/dealers. The firm, which has more than \$75 million under management through LPL Financial, has been named among the top 25 financial planners in Greater Columbus by Business First in 2007, 2008 and 2009. Securities and advisory services offered through LPL Financial, a Registered Investment Advisor, Member FINRA/SIPC. Whalen & Company is not affiliated with LPL Financial.

March 31st Deadline Approaching for Neighborhood Grant Applications

If you've ever wanted to start up a civic group in your neighborhood or work on a beautification project on your street now is your chance to make a difference in your neighborhood. The City of Worthington and the Worthington Community Relations Commission are inviting resident groups to apply for a Neighborhood Grant in 2010. The purpose of this grant program is to provide financial incentives and create opportunities for neighbors to work together, form neighborhood organizations, make improvements in their neighborhoods and/or develop programs that promote neighborhood cohesiveness.

Grants of up to \$500 will be awarded for projects that demonstrate a public benefit and promote neighborhood identity; aid in the development of a neighborhood organization; increase neighborhood safety; implement neighborhood beautification efforts; or build a sense of community in neighborhoods. The deadline for applying is March 31, 2010. Funds will be awarded by April 30, 2010. Application materials and information are available to download online at www.worthington.org or may be picked up at the Worthington Municipal Building, 6550 N. High Street during regular business hours. For more information, call 436-3100.

Save the Date – May 12 Neighborhood Leaders Meeting

Join the Community Relations Commission for an informative meeting focused on Worthington neighborhoods, May 12th at 7:00 p.m. at the Griswold Center. This meeting will bring together neighborhood representatives, City and community leaders to share communication strategies, community resource information, and leadership ideas. Watch for more information to come in April via the Neighborhood Network or visit www.worthington.org. To sign up for the Neighborhood Network, email brown@ci.worthington.oh.us.

Introductions and Farewells



(l. to r.) David Foust, Bob Chosy, Mike Duffey, President Lou Goorey, David Norstrom, President Pro-tem Bonnie Michael, Scott Myers.

In November, Worthington voters elected Scott Myers as the Worthington City Council's newest member and re-elected Dr. Lou Goorey, Mike Duffey and David Foust to new 4-year terms. Worthington City Council meets the first three Mondays of every month at 7:30 p.m. at the Worthington Municipal Building, 6550 N. High Street.



Parks and Recreation Director Lynda Chambers has announced plans to retire on July 31, 2010. Chambers has worked with the Worthington Parks and Recreation Department

for nearly 33 years, starting as the department's first Art Leader in January 1978. She was named Director of Parks and Recreation in August 2007.

The City of Worthington is pleased to welcome Molly Roberts as our new Director of Finance. Roberts came to Worthington in December 2009 after serving the Village of Granville since 1986, most recently as Assistant Village Manager & Finance Director. She replaces former Finance Director Steve Gandee, who retired in July 2009.



Mark your Calendar for these Special Dates and Events

Through April 24th -

Indoor Winter Farmers Market:

The indoor Winter Farmers Market continues every Saturday from 10am - 1pm at the Griswold Center, 777 High Street.

April 21 - 22, PreCycle Day

This Earth Day, save space in the landfill by offering your used and no-longer-needed items on PreCycle Day: A city-wide free exchange of reusable items at curbside in front of your homes. Set out your reusable items and then check out other offerings in your neighborhood. For more information, visit sustainableworthington.org.

May 4 - Election Day

Don't forget to VOTE!

May 8 - Plant Fest & Outdoor Farmers Market begins

Vendors line the sidewalks of old Worthington selling fresh produce, flowers, baked goods and more. Plant Fest takes place from 9am-4pm on the Village Green.

May 23 - Concerts on the Green begins - Sundays 7pm.

Bring the family and some lawn chairs and enjoy live musical entertainment on the northwest corner of the Village Green every Sunday through August.

May 31 - Memorial Day Parade

Parade steps off at 10am at the intersection of High Street and Rt. 161 and travels south to Walnut Grove Cemetery.

May 31 - Holiday Hours

City of Worthington municipal offices will be closed on May 31, 2010 for the Memorial Day holiday. The Community Center will be open regular hours, 6am - 9:30pm.

Street Tree Program Information

Orders are being taken now for the Worthington Street Tree cost-sharing program for spring planting of trees in City right-of-ways. The deadline for ordering trees is April 7th. Call 436-2743 or visit the website below.

Follow Worthington on Facebook & Twitter. Visit

www.worthington.org to connect and for details on all upcoming events.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection Changes

Worthington residents who depend on the annual Household Hazardous Waste collection each year to dispose of their hazardous waste, need to know about some changes in the program for 2010. Instead of a hazardous waste disposal day in Worthington and a dozen other municipalities around central Ohio, the Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio (SWACO) is switching to four regional collection sites in 2010. These collections will take place from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on the dates and locations listed to the right.

Another change to the SWACO collection is that latex paint cans will no longer be accepted. Latex paint is water soluble and can be dried out for disposal in the trash. There are paint hardeners available in stores or you can mix the paint with cat litter or sawdust. Leave the lid off to speed up the process. When the paint is dry, throw it in with your regular trash.

April 24, 2010 - Northwest

Dublin, Ashland Inc.
5200 Blazer Pkwy.

June 19, 2010 - Southeast

Alum Creek Transfer Station
2100 Alum Creek Dr.

September 4, 2010 - Northeast

Westerville Service Dept.
350 Park Meadow Rd.

October 16, 2010 - Southwest

Grove City- TOSOH America Inc.
3600 Gantz Road

Permanent Drop off location

Weds. & Fri. - 12pm-6pm

Thurs. - 9am-5pm

1249 Essex Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43201

For more information please contact the Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio at www.swaco.org or call (614) 871-5100.

How to Reach Us

Municipal Administration Building

436-3100 -- 6550 N. High St.
City Manager's office, Development, Planning & Zoning, City Clerk, Mayor's Court, Finance, Personnel, Public Information

Law Department

436-7429 -- 370 Highland Ave.

Parks & Recreation

436-2743 -- 345 E. Wilson Bridge Rd.
Community Center, recreation programs, park maintenance, street tree program

Griswold Center

842-6320 -- 777 High St.
Recreation Programs for 55 and older

Public Service Department

431-2425 -- 380 Highland Ave.
Trash collection, recycling, yard waste, sewers, maintenance

Engineering Department

431-2424 -- 374 Highland Ave.
Building Permits & Inspection

Division of Police

885-4463 -- 6555 Worthington Galena Rd.

Division of Fire and EMS

885-7640 -- 6500 N. High St.
CPR classes, public education, fire inspection

Visit us online at

www.worthington.org



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New Worthington Playgrounds Going Green

You would never know from just looking at them, but the new climbing structures and play surfaces at the Highgate and Whitney playgrounds are made from recycled milk jugs and other post consumer materials. Recycled materials were used in an effort to be environmentally responsible, while adding two great new outdoor play areas for the community. The playgrounds, adjacent to the Olentangy Parklands, have both been renovated with all new equipment. The natural feel to the park has been carried through the playground design using a tree house feel. The rubber safety surface is designed as a river running through the play area with the equipment allowing creative ways to cross it. Both playgrounds have recently been spruced up for spring and are ready for children and their families to enjoy.



Highgate Playground



Whitney Playground

Green Playground Facts:

- Total material recycled after the old playground was demolished: 4,640 pounds or 2.32 tons.
- Included the recycling of: 180 pounds of shredder material; 2,700 pounds #2 steel; 1,760 pounds of aluminum.
- \$384 was received from recycling the scrap metal.
- What was installed: Playground safety surface is 75% recycled content.
- Whitney Avenue: 67% recycled content, including 20,081 milk jugs from Worthington, MN and 2,179 lbs of reclaimed scrap steel (from Walbridge, OH)
- Highgate: 70% recycled content, including 21,776 milk jugs from (Worthington, MN), 1,736 lbs of reclaimed scrap steel (Walbridge, OH) and 2,000 lbs of mine tailings (Redding, CA)

These calculations were made according to the specifications used by the U.S. Green Building Council in their LEED rating system.



FACT SHEET

May 4, 2010 Income Tax Request

On May 4, 2010, Worthington voters will decide whether to approve an income tax increase from 2.0% to 2.5% in the City of Worthington. As you go to the polls to make your decision, the City of Worthington wishes to make you aware of the facts surrounding the income tax to help you understand how this proposed rate increase may affect you.

Why is this increase being proposed?

The City of Worthington has seen a decline in income tax and other major revenues. With over 60% of the City's revenue coming from income tax (income tax represents 65% of all operating revenue and 94% of all funds for Capital Improvements), the loss of employers and lower payroll due to the recession have resulted in less revenue. This directly affects the City's ability to operate its quality programs and services. In addition, Capital funding is at its lowest levels in 10 years and our infrastructure continues to age and needs to be maintained. Financial projections indicate that the City will need \$3.5 million in additional revenue annually to operate and maintain current service levels.

Who is impacted by increasing from a 2% to 2.5% income tax rate?

Individuals pay first where they work.

- Worthington residents who do not earn wages, but receive Social Security, company pensions, dividends and interest income would not be impacted and are exempt.
- 41% of Worthington wage earners already pay 2.5% if they work in Columbus or another municipality with a higher income tax. They would not be impacted.
- Worthington residents employed in Worthington or other communities currently at 2.0% will pay an additional \$250 per year per \$50,000 of income.
- In addition, Worthington would realize additional revenue from the income taxes of individuals who live in Columbus but work in Worthington. These people currently pay 2.0% to Worthington and .5% to Columbus. With the tax increase, the City of Worthington would receive all 2.5% to support local programs and services with no change in tax liability to the individual.

What will the City do if the issue passes?

Through a series of focus groups and surveys, residents have told us that maintaining the quality of current service levels is a priority. If approved, the proposed increase will allow the City to:

- Maintain the quality of services provided to Worthington residents (such as snow removal, police and fire protection, recreational programs and trash, recycling and yard waste collection.)
- Keep the City's infrastructure in good condition (such as roads, sewers and City facilities.)
- Increase efforts to bring more jobs into Worthington.

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What if the income tax issue does not pass?

The City would work with the community to determine what actions to take to best serve residents in the City of Worthington. The City would seek public participation and review existing survey data about residents' priorities before making any decisions. Options may include a combination of service cuts, taxes and fees for services.

What has already been done to reduce costs?

Declining revenues have been impacting the City budget for several years. In order to be mindful of the need to decrease spending, City Council has taken steps each year to make cuts and reduce expenditures. In mid-2009, the City made approximately \$654,000 in operating cuts. Additional cuts are included in the 2010 budget. Over the last five years, the City's actual expenditures have increased an average of 2.78%.

Over the last 10 years the City has:

- Eliminated 10 fulltime, 5 part-time, 3 temporary & 3 intern positions
- Restructured 4 positions to reduce costs
- Reduced the use of contractual assistance
- Restricted overtime, including for emergency response
- Enacted pay freezes
- Restricted training and supplies

Annual savings realized by reductions in these areas: \$1,230,000

In addition to these cuts, a number of steps have been taken to reduce costs through efficiencies in service delivery and administration: For example:

- Reduced cost of ice and snow removal by cutting back on the purchase of salt and relying more heavily on the less expensive Geomelt (a derivative of beet juice.)
- Cut back on fuel usage and fleet expenses by reducing the number of City owned vehicles.
- Consolidated purchasing of office supplies for a more economical pricing structure.
- Relying on electronic delivery of City Council and other meeting materials and correspondence instead of printing paper copies.
- 45% of all Parks and Recreation program registration is completed online.

If approved, when will the City begin collecting the 2.5% income tax?

Income earned by residents, employees and companies within Worthington would be subject to the income tax increase on July 1, 2010. The City would begin to realize the increase depending on when returns are filed and the effective due date of these filings, most likely beginning in the 3rd quarter of 2010.

Where can I get more information?

Learn more about how the proposed income tax increase affects you by visiting the Worthington website at www.worthington.org. Information includes details on the City's financial condition and the reasons behind the income tax request. Email inquiries may be submitted to incometax@ci.worthington.oh.us or call (614) 436-3100 for more information.

The public is also invited to attend any of the following Public Forums:

- Thursday, April 1st 7:30 p.m.-Worthington Griswold Center, 777 High Street
- Thursday, April 8th 7:30 p.m.-Worthington Community Center, 345 E. Wilson Bridge Rd.
- Tuesday, April 13th 7:30 p.m.- Beth Tikvah, 6121 Olentangy River Rd.