

**BELLE PLAINE CITY COUNCIL
TRUTH IN TAXATION
DECEMBER 2, 2024**

1. Call to Order. Roll Call.

The Belle Plaine City Council conducted the Truth in Taxation Hearing on Monday, December 2, 2024 at 6:00 PM at City Hall, 218 North Meridian Street, Belle Plaine, MN. Mayor Woletz called the meeting to order with Councilmembers Cary Coop, Rex Stacey, and Patricia Krings present. Councilmember James Evans was absent.

Also present was City Administrator Dawn Meyer, Finance Director Jirik, Police Sergeant Vycital, City Attorney Vose, City Engineer Duncan and Public Works Superintendent Otto present. Wanda Savage served as the video recording operator.

2. PUBLIC HEARING – TRUTH IN TAXATION.

The Council will accept public comment on the proposed 2025 Budget and Levy.

Mayor Woletz read the truth in taxation statement which explains the purpose of the Truth in Taxation Hearing is to allow public comment on the proposed 2025 budget and levy.

Finance Director Jirik provided an overview of the proposed levy.

Mayor Woletz opened the public hearing at 6:12 PM and asked for public comment.

Tony Voight, 1304 Dove Court, expressed concern regarding the City's spending and Jordan and New Prague having half of Belle Plaine's City budget. Voight explained he has reached out to Scott County about taxes and noted he is being taxed out of his home. Voight explained his tax burden is more than his principal and interest on his payment noting the City needs to curb some of the spending.

Councilmember Stacy inquired if anybody can address on if we compare to Jordan and New Prague. Finance Director Jirik explained each city and their services are different. Jirik explained she looked at New Prague and they are not part of the Met Council which intern gives them a larger portion of LGA as they do not get fiscal disparity. Jirik explained they also don't do building maintenance or capital planning instead they bond for those things when they are needed. Jirik explained other items are covered by their enterprise funds and not in the general fund, explaining enterprise funds are funds generated by fees from water/sewer/electric. Stacey inquired what the roll of the Met Council plays. Jirik explained the Met Council has many parts one of which is fiscal disparity from the State which is tax base sharing.

Jackie Foster, 1268 Ridge Lane, explained her taxes went up 13% and not the average house increase. Foster explained her taxes have increased \$1,500.00 in the last three years. Foster noted spending as the reason for the increases and suggests finding a happy medium to keep costs down and not continue to raise taxes by \$700.00 every year.

Ryan Ladd, 221 S. Elk St., noted a general question of what are we doing wrong. Ladd opined the City is obviously doing something wrong comparing the City's budget to Jordan and New Prague. Ladd explained we cannot keep raising the levy every year explaining people will start moving because they cannot afford to live in this community.

Eric Schack, 620 W. South Street, explained he has lived in Belle Plaine for two and a half years and agrees with what is being. Schack expressed concern with having to come to a meeting to express his concerns and no changes will happen. Schack explained he wanted to know what needs to be said to keep the resolution from being passed and requested time to allow some reconsideration of the budget.

Brady Hartmann, 780 E. Court Street, explained a lot of good things have happened in our town including All-Wheel-Wednesdays. Hartmann explained the City needs to consider creative ways to get on and off the highway to help with bring big businesses and help lower taxes in the future. Hartmann noted creative ways should be considered to bring additional revenue into the community to help lower the overall taxes.

MOTION by Councilmember Coop, second by Councilmember Stacey, to close the public hearing at 6:28 PM. ALL VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

3. Schedule Continuation Hearing, if necessary.

4. Adjourn.

MOTION by Councilmember Coop, second by Councilmember Krings, to adjourn the meeting at 6:29 PM. ALL VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully Submitted,

Renee Eyrich
Recording Secretary