

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNTY BOARD**  
**WASHINGTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA**  
**TRUTH IN TAXATION PUBLIC HEARING**  
**DECEMBER 6, 2007**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners convened at 7:00 p.m. in the Washington County Government Center, County Board Room, to conduct a Truth-in-Taxation public hearing for the purposes of review of the proposed 2008 county budget. Present were Commissioners Peterson, Pulkrabek, Kriesel, Orth, and Hegberg. Absent none. Board Chair Kriesel presided. Also present were James Schug, County Administrator; Molly O'Rourke, Deputy Administrator; Melinda Kirk, Budget/Financial Analyst; Sheriff Bill Hutton; Don Theisen, Director of Transportation and Physical Development; Sue Hedlund, Deputy Director of Public Health and Environment; Dan Papin, Community Services Director; Patricia Conley, Library Director; Doug Johnson, County Attorney; Harley Will, Financial Services Director; Kevin Corbid, Director of Property Records and Taxpayer Services; Joanne Helm, Assessment/Taxation Program Manager; Kay McAloney, Human Resources Director; Tom Adkins, Community Corrections Director; Mjyke Nelson, Information Technology Director; Larry Timmerman, Senior Planner; Amanda Hollis, Management Analyst I; and Steve Nelson, Public Information Coordinator II.

The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board Chair Kriesel opened the hearing with a welcome to those in attendance.

Jim Schug, County Administrator, gave a brief overview of the budget process to date. He stated that final action on the budget and levy will be taken on December 11 at the County Board meeting. He noted that various Department Heads are here this evening and are available to provide information or answer questions. He also mentioned that staff from the Assessment Department is available to help those who have questions about their property valuations.

Molly O'Rourke, Deputy Administrator, presented an overview of the proposed 2008 budget.

Kevin Corbid, Director of Property Records and Taxpayer Services, presented an overview of the property valuation process.

The Board Chair opened the meeting for comments from the audience.

Carl Hurtgen, 6161 North 48<sup>th</sup> Street, Oakdale – Mr. Hurtgen stated that his tax increase is 242% on a piece of property that is unbuildable and has no access. He grows raspberries on this piece of property and he tries to keep the grass mowed. He feels this is unfair, but he will meet with the Assessors and try to work this out.

The Board Chair asked for further comments; none were heard.

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Commissioner Hegberg thanked staff for doing a good job of going through the budget process and the cooperation the Board has received from them. He feels the county does provide excellent government service in an efficient manner.

Commissioner Orth stated he has heard from many residents that they are proud and impressed with Washington County. They are pleased with the services provided. He receives almost no criticisms at all.

Commissioner Pulkrabek thanked everyone who is here this evening. He stated that there are 87 counties in Minnesota, and Washington County will be the 86<sup>th</sup> lowest, Dakota County has the lowest, tax rate in 2008. In 2007 Washington County was actually the lowest. The Board received an e-mail asking why the tax statements were sent out before the county knows what the ramifications are for school district levy referendums. The answer is the State of Minnesota tells the counties when those forms must be sent out and what those forms will include.

Commissioner Peterson also thanked every one for coming out and the staff who came to offer their services. She feels the budget is a thoughtful process. It starts early, and the 2009 process will start early next year. The county provides a number of opportunities for the public to listen to the proposed budget and they are all televised. Tonight is a culmination of a very long and thoughtful process.

The Board Chair thanked everyone for coming to this evening's meeting. He also thanked staff for bringing forward another good budget. It focuses on core services. He is disappointed that the State of Minnesota continues to issue unfunded mandates. He invited everyone to stay after the meeting to discuss their individual situations with county staff. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Gary Kriesel, Chair  
County Board

Attest:

James R. Schug  
County Administrator