

August 12, 2024

Why more taxes?

In recent years the influx of new residents less impacted by homestead exemption have automatically contributed to a permanent increase in St. Tammany's tax base. They have more expendable income and pay more in property taxes, yet it is still a rare occasion to see a public works vehicle, much less doing anything.

I live in unincorporated Slidell but go to Kenner, Metairie & the gulf coast every week on random days and not a day goes by without seeing public works crews maintaining or improving public spaces in those municipalities. So with those areas levying less tax it seems something is wrong in St. Tammany. Jefferson even includes millages for their levees and public transportation. In St. Tammany maybe the various agencies should get less and the parish operations like public works and code enforcement should get more. Millages for fire, schools and the corner especially seem out of balance. And for me, the internet has replaced the library.

The first step is comparing yourself to other areas and realizing there is a problem. I suspect dedicated taxes are the root of the problem. Every agency wants to grab as much tax revenue as they can and some of them likely get more than they need.

Taxation by politics is a poor way to do things. We need an unbiased, non-political, office of independent inspector general. The inspectors general's primary mission would be to review the allocation and funding appropriateness of the various parish agencies. The end goal would be a ballot proposal to reallocate dedicated taxes based upon a needs and appropriateness basis. Having an inspector general making the recommendations would also take the political pressure off of our elected officials.

Some resources on taxation is included below:

St. Tammany Parish Assessor Website - loaded with info

<https://stpao.org>

State of Louisiana millages by parish

<https://lla.la.gov/resources/assessors-and-millages/maximum-millage-reports?parish=1045&year=2023>

Jefferson parish:

<https://app.lla.la.gov/maximummillagereports/104523.pdf>

St. Tammany Parish

<https://app.lla.la.gov/maximummillagereports/106923.pdf>

Look up any Louisiana tax bill here complete with millages

(Louisiana Tax Commission Parish Tax Roll database)

https://www.latax.state.la.us/Menu_ParishTaxRolls/TaxRolls.aspx

Note, the assessor's office is a state of Louisiana (not parish) agency. They do not set the tax only appraise the value of property. Your vote determines the tax via millages tax payers approved. Now we need outside help to determine if we voted correctly.

Check the forum at <http://www.eiohforum.com> for additional info.