



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Many of you have reached out to me regarding the claim that Winter Park taxes have been raised. Thank you for giving me the chance to clarify. Unfortunately, you may have received emails containing false information.

The Commission HAS NOT raised the millage rate (taxes). Let me repeat, the Commission DID NOT raise the millage rate. As I stated at last week's City Commission meeting, I have no plans to vote for an increase to the City's millage rate.



Recently, former City Commissioners sent emails to Winter Park residents stating that the Commission had raised taxes. This is false.

The truth is that the Commission in July voted to keep the option open IF we needed to do so in the Fall. If we hadn't voted for this in July, we would have lost this option which was basically an "insurance policy" that did not cost the City a penny. It gave the City flexibility in case the economic situation was worse than anticipated due to Covid-19 and the related drop in sales tax revenues, commercial income, permitting, fees, multiple hurricanes, etc. Of course, raising the millage rate was the very last option we wanted to consider. Other municipalities keep options open like this as "best practices" for governance.

I am very aware that many of our residents and businesses are experiencing financial, emotional, and even physical challenges during this time. Therefore, I am working closely with the City to cut costs, not raise the millage rate, and balance the budget while retaining strong City services.

Feel free to call the City Manager's office at City Hall if you would like to confirm that your Winter Park taxes were NOT raised. His office: 407-599-3236.

Fortunately, the sales tax revenue dip was not as severe as we expected. The City has frozen hiring of 15 positions, 5 of which are Police Officers, and taken many other measures to offset the losses. We also haven't had multiple hurricanes. Therefore, as I stated at last week's Commission meeting, I see no reason to raise the millage rate when the Commission meets to discuss this issue.

Again, I'm so very sorry that you were given incorrect information that caused concerns.

Wishing you the very best of health and safety during this challenging time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sheila".

Sheila DeCiccio
Winter Park City Commissioner Seat 2
Sheila@sheilaforwinterpark.com
