

CITY OF XENIA, OHIO

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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City of Xenia – Issue will be on May Ballot

Xenia, Ohio, February 12, 2010: At the Xenia City Council meeting on Thursday, February 11, 2010, Council conducted a second reading of a Resolution to place on the May 4, 2010, primary election ballot a question to raise the City of Xenia's income tax rate from 1.75% to 2.25%. This Resolution, passed unanimously, is the last step in the process that will give voters the right to determine its level of safety services. The proposed tax increase is expected to generate an estimated \$2.7 million for the City. This revenue would help to *maintain* current Police and Fire services as well as provide much needed dollars for street improvements and other general capital improvements. If voters approve the legislation, the City's tax credit will not be affected, which is a maximum of 1.5 percent. Further, 0.25 percent of the increase is dedicated solely to maintain current Police and Fire staffing levels and services and provide funding for police and fire capital needs (i.e., police cars, ambulances, etc.).

Fire Chief Jeff Leaming said, "The Xenia Fire Division prides itself on effective Fire and Emergency Medical Services. We have an excellent group of dedicated employees that respond to the emergency needs of this community. However, without the additional revenue, things will change. The layoff of six firefighters is imminent and will force the closure of Fire Station 2 (849 W. Second St.). We will not have adequate staffing to maintain that station. These cuts will definitely affect the level of service we can provide to our residents. Without adequate personnel, we will not be able to meet the needs of our citizens ... and that is a tremendous concern."

Police Chief Randy Person said, "This levy is critical for the future of our Police services. Already, two positions remain vacant—additional cuts will further compromise the safety of our residents and our City. The revenue from this levy will be used to fund the re-employment of two officers, including the School Resource Officer, and it will save four Police Officers from being laid off. It will also fund the purchase of our capital needs including police cars. All of these things are important to our Police force ... we want to provide our residents and our City with excellent Police services, but we can't do that without additional revenue. In my 33 years of service with the City, this is the most serious financial crisis faced by the Police Division."

Non-union personnel have been on a wage-freeze since April 2008. In addition, City and union leadership have worked together to negotiate concessions on wages with all unions, including Police, Fire, Communications (9-1-1 Operators), and AFSCME (Public Service).

If approved by the voters on the May 4th ballot, the rate increase would be effective January 1, 2011. For a Xenia household making \$40,000 a year, the increase would cost less than \$17 a month. All Social Security, company pensions, dividends, and interest income would continue to be exempt from the City's income tax.

Xenia residents will receive Levy Information in their February Utility Bills and are encouraged to call City Hall with any questions. Further, a webpage has been created on the City's website to provide citizens with information surrounding this ballot issue. Please visit their website at www.ci.xenia.oh.us, and go to the page titled, "May 4, 2010 Ballot Issue" to learn more.

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