

TAX MATTERS

**OCTOBER 8, 2009, Issue #09-40, by Bernard Ridens, Executive Director
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- 1. NATIONAL SURVEY ON THE IRS AND THE GRADUATED INCOME TAX**
- 2. HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**
- 3. PUBLIC MEETINGS**
- 4. TAX QUESTIONS 4 U**
- 5. TAX QUOTE OF THE WEEK**

REVIEW OF PAST TAX MATTERS

OCTOBER 1, 2009 (#09-39)

- **THIRTY-YEAR SALARY COMPARISON**
 - Salaries of local public officials in 1979 and 2009
- **CITY PARKS ON FACEBOOK**
 - The Terre Haute Parks Department has setup a Facebook account to promote the Park's general information to the public.

SEPTEMBER 24, 2009 (#09-38)

- **TAX TOPICS**
 - You can find the newest Tax Topics at <http://www.taxtopics.org/TaxTopicsFall2009HQ.pdf>
- **THE BLUEBERRY STORY**
 - An account from public speaker Jamie Vollmer

SEPTEMBER 17, 2009 (#09-37)

- **TAX TOPICS**
 - The next issue of Tax Topics will be sent by e-mail and will be available on our website, www.taxtopics.org. Free paper copies of the Fall 2009 Tax Topics issue are only available by request. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

SEPTEMBER 10, 2009 (#09-36)

- **WASHINGTON RENOVATION**
 - The estimated costs of renovating Booker T. Washington High School. The School Board voted 6-1 Monday to move the program to South Vigo H.S.
- **BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS AND SAFETY**
 - Agenda for the Sept. 14 Board of Public Works and Safety meeting

The Taxpayers Association is a not-for-profit 501(c)(4) organization supported by membership dues. Any citizen or group of citizens in Vigo County may be a member. Current members are encouraged to promote membership in the organization by giving the attached application to a potential member. [See the TA application and dues structure.](#) **This is NOT an invoice for your dues.**

1. NATIONAL SURVEY ON THE IRS AND THE GRADUATED INCOME TAX

I was selected randomly by the National Taxpayers Union to complete this survey on current and proposed tax systems. Before I complete this survey, I need your input on whether the nation should go to an alternative tax system or whether the nation should keep the current income tax system, as is.

This is an image of the card I will mail to the NTU:

Part A: The IRS and The Tax Law

The tax code exceeds 5 million words. The IRS often orders taxpayers to pay taxes not owed or doesn't give credit for taxes paid. Total taxpayer cost of IRS system: **\$232.6 billion every year.**

On a scale of 1-10, rate the importance of abolishing the IRS and the graduated income tax.

Important Unimportant

1...2...3...4...5...6...7...8...9...10

Please circle the appropriate number

Part B: Tax Reform Options

Reform options under consideration are:

1) The Fair Tax, 2) The Flat Rate Income Tax, 3) Keep the current graduated income tax.

Please study the provisions that follow, and then vote for the option you prefer.

Provisions of the Fair Tax (National Sales Tax)

"Fair Tax" abolishes the current, unfair U.S. Tax Code and replaces it with a national sales tax collected at the cash register at time of purchase. It raises the same amount of money as the current system. You keep your entire paycheck (no federal withholdings). You decide when and how much tax you pay, based on how much you consume.

Provisions of the Flat Income Tax

A flat tax would be simple. The annual tax form would be the size of a postcard. Flat income tax would reduce the IRS. It would not eliminate it. You would pay a single tax rate, after taking a standard deduction based on the size of your household.

Your Vote:

Fair Tax Flat Tax No Change

Please reply with a statement about this proposal.

2. HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Occasionally we bring focus to a local government organization and what services they provide for the community. The following is the overview from the Terre Haute Human Relations Commission Annual Report:

The Human Relations Commission consists of seven citizens of the City of Terre Haute who are appointed by the Mayor and the City Council. Commissioners serve on a volunteer basis for three-year terms to carry out the responsibilities stated in General Ordinance No. 2, 1999 and General Ordinance No. 32, 2003. The Commission budget is funded by the Common Council and includes the salary of one staff person to administer the duties.

The Human Relations Commission provides a **local alternative** to having civil rights law agencies from the federal and state government investigating civil rights complaints in Terre Haute. The director does an intake from complaints and gives time for the respondents to review the information. He then offers reconciliation and mediation services for discrimination issues. The local Commission also provides technical assistance and training to employers, landlords, educators or any person trying to eliminate issues of discrimination.

Interest in the 1990s by a local community taskforce resulted in the creation of the Human Relations Commission when Terre Haute General Ordinance No. 4, 1999 was passed by the City Council. This City was the **latest** of 21 cities in Indiana to have a local human rights commission.

The Commission was appointed in November 2000. In 2001, the Commissioners began the work of forming an organization to carry out the charges of the Ordinance. A Human Relations Commission Office was established at 506 Ohio Street, suite 2, Terre Haute.

The Commission employs an executive director as its only staff. Discrimination complaints, outreach information, diversity education, and program development have been handled solely by this staff director. Some of the complaint conciliation, as well as the education and research components, have been accomplished by the director working with community partners in collaborative efforts.

Source: Terre Haute Human Relations Commission - 2008 Annual Report

We acquired this information from the Human Relations Commission Executive Director, Jeffrey Lorick. The 2009 annual budget of the Commission is \$82,370.

3. PUBLIC MEETINGS

The purpose of this calendar is to encourage taxpayers to attend public meetings. Taxpaying persons working at your business or living in your neighborhood should be encouraged to attend a meeting of their choice at least once per year. The date and time for the meetings listed below are always subject to change. **Organizations that are underlined have a web page that can be accessed by clicking on their respective hyperlinks.** The contact person is also listed. You should call the appropriate office and confirm the date and time if you plan to attend.

Date	Time	Public Meeting	Location	Contact Info
Thur. Oct. 8	7:00 pm	<u>City Council – Regular Meeting</u>	City Hall – Courtroom	Michelle 232-3375
Tue. Oct. 13	9:00 am	<u>County Commissioners</u>	County Annex	Judy 462-3367
Tue. Oct. 13	2:00 pm	<u>Board of Public Works and Safety</u>	City Hall – 1 st Floor	Robin 232-4767
Tue. Oct. 13	5:00 pm	<u>County Council</u>	County Annex	Auditor 462-3361
Tue. Oct. 13	7:00 pm	Seelyville Town Board	Seelyville Water Office	Tamara 877-2665
Wed. Oct. 14	10:00 am	<u>County Board of Zoning Appeals</u>	County Annex	Judy 462-3367
Wed. Oct. 14	2:00 pm	<u>E-911 Advisory Board</u>	County Jail – Sheriff's Training Room	Greg 462-3226 ext. 320
Wed. Oct. 14	4:30 pm	<u>City Park Board – General Meeting</u>	Deming Park	Eddie 232-2727
Wed. Oct. 14	7:00 pm	<u>Airport Authority</u>	Airport	Kara 877-2524
Thur. Oct. 15	2:00 pm	Tree Advisory Board	City Hall Mayor's Conf. Room	Jennifer 232-4028
Mon. Oct. 19	5:30 pm	<u>Human Relations Commission</u>	Booker T. Washington Center	Jeff 232-0110
Mon. Oct. 19	7:00 pm	<u>Vigo County Public Library</u>	Vigo County Public Library	Nancy 232-1113
Tue. Oct. 20	9:00 am	<u>County Commissioners</u>	County Annex	Judy 462-3367
Tue. Oct. 20	10:00 am	<u>City Board of Sanitary Commissioners</u>	City Hall – 3 rd Floor	Sally 235-5458

Wed.	Oct. 21	9:30 am	Clay-Owen-Vigo Solid Waste District	109 E. Nat'l, Brazil IN	Janet	800-387-3380
Wed.	Oct. 21	4:00 pm	<u>City Redevelopment Commission</u>	City Hall – 1 st Floor	Phenny	232-0018
Wed.	Oct. 21	5:00 pm	<u>Vigo County Board of Health</u>	County Annex	Louise	462-3428
Thur.	Oct. 22	4:15 pm	<u>Vigo County Redevelopment Commission</u>	County Annex	Amanda	234-2524
Mon.	Oct. 26	2:00 pm	<u>Board of Public Works and Safety</u>	City Hall – Board of Public Works Room	Robin	232-4767
Mon.	Oct. 26	4:00 pm	<u>County Park Board</u>	County Annex	Julia	462-3391
Mon.	Oct. 26	5:30 pm	Terre Haute Housing Authority	2001 N. 19 th Street	Jeff	232-1381
Mon.	Oct. 26	7:00 pm	<u>Vigo County School Board</u>	VCSC Board Room	Judy	462-4216
Tue.	Oct. 27	9:00 am	<u>County Commissioners</u>	County Annex	Judy	462-3367
Tue.	Oct. 27	5:00 pm	<u>County Council</u>	County Annex	Auditor	462-3361
Wed.	Oct. 28	4:30 pm	<u>City Park Board – Business Meeting</u>	Deming Park	Eddie	232-2727
Wed.	Oct. 28	5:30 pm	<u>Information Technology Advisory Board</u>	City Hall – 1 st Floor	Brad	244-2316
Wed.	Oct. 28	7:00 pm	<u>Airport Authority</u>	Airport	Kara	877-2524
Tue.	Nov. 17	12:00 noon	<u>Taxpayers Association Board Meeting</u>	TBA	Bernard	235-1361

4. TAX QUESTIONS 4 U

Today we are launching a new topic for *Tax Matters*. It is a tax-related question for you to answer and compete for most questions answered correctly during a three-month period. The purpose of this topic is to encourage readership of *Tax Matters* and improve taxation and government education in our community. Send your answers anytime to the following email address: taxquestions4U@aol.com. We will tally the correct answers and the correct answer will be given next week.

Here is this week's question:

A person pays \$2100 a year in Vigo County property taxes.

- How much does that person pay in taxes **per each hour he exists in that given year?**
- Given that the person works a 40-hour workweek, every week that year, how much does that person pay in taxes **per work hour?**

5. TAX QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"I would rather owe you the rest of my life than beat you out of it."

- Author Unknown

END

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