

City of Port residents face higher tax bills

Written by Kristyn Halbig Ziehm
Wednesday, 18 November 2009 23:25

Property owners can expect hike in overall bill, but final amount won't be known until school credit is determined

Port Washington residents who own a house valued at \$200,000 will pay \$118 more in property taxes this year, providing the state school tax credit remains the same as last year, City Administrator Mark Grams said.

The city does not yet know the amount of the school tax credit, which is determined by the state, he said. That number is the only figure used in calculating the tax rate that the city doesn't yet know, Grams said.

If the credit remains \$1.74 per \$1,000 valuation — the same as last year — the net tax rate would be \$18.76 per \$1,000, Grams said, so the owner of a \$200,000 house would pay \$3,751 in property taxes this year as opposed to \$3,633 last year.

Of the government entities levying property taxes, the city is the only one whose tax rate is decreasing, from \$6.04 last year to \$6.03 per \$1,000 valuation, said Ald. Tom Hudson, chairman of the city's Finance and License Committee.

Grams said city residents will pay \$10.17 per \$1,000 in school taxes, an increase of 54 cents. The \$2.18 tax rate for Milwaukee Area Technical College reflects an increase of four cents, and the Ozaukee County tax rate of \$1.92 is an increase of two cents.

The state tax rate remains stable at 19 cents per \$1,000, he said.

"We're trying to keep as many city services as we can," Hudson said, including the TransPort shared-ride taxi run by the city.

The \$8.5 million budget adopted by the Common Council on Tuesday does that, he said.

The budget is .78% less than last year's spending plan, and the \$4.88 million levy reflects an increase of .85%, Grams said.

The city's valuation increased about \$8 million, or a little more than 1%, he added.

City of Port residents face higher tax bills

Written by Kristyn Halbig Ziehm
Wednesday, 18 November 2009 23:25

No residents commented on the budget during the annual budget hearing, which was held Tuesday.

However, several officials expressed some concern over the fact the city is combining a clerical position at City Hall with the police aide's position.

"I'm worried about shorting ourselves at City Hall," Ald. Paul Neumyer said. At the police department, he said, he does not want the worker to handle such duties as directing traffic or issuing parking tickets but instead to handle clerical duties.

The combined position will be allotted to the police department for about two-thirds of the time. The remaining one-third of the time will be spent at City Hall.

The shared, full-time position was a way to avoid any layoffs, Grams said.

He noted that he and City Treasurer Mary Bley determined they could get by with one less full-time employee at City Hall. Megan Dahm, the police aide, recently resigned, leaving that post open.

"I thought this (shared position) was a good way to meet our budget and still allow everyone to keep their jobs," Grams said, estimating the city will save between \$50,000 and \$60,000 with the change.