

Local Republicans rally to discuss tax rate and budget
written by Newspack Team | March 19, 2007



Keith Drake

doesn't hide how he feels about taxes in Albemarle County. In fact, the Chairman of the Albemarle County Republicans takes his low tax message with him everywhere he goes since his Jeep has "58 cents" painted on the back (photo at right). Over the past several weeks, Mr. Drake has led a campaign to get the

Albemarle County Board of Supervisors

to start their budget discussions from a different vantage point, that of real estate property taxes increasing by only 1% over last year. That campaign included a rally tonight at the County office building that attracted over 150 residents. In his remarks, Mr. Drake argued local government should start their budget revenue assumptions based upon a tax rate of \$ per \$100 in assessed property values and build their budget up from there with modest increases for inflation, population growth, and student enrollment. Additional speakers at the rally included

Buddy Weber

(City Republican Chair),

Al Aitken

(

)

, Christian Schoenewald

, and

Peter Way

.

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has

previously reported

on the differing views of Mr. Drake and members of the Board of Supervisors, like

Dennis Rooker (Jack Jouett)

, as to whether state law says the tax rate has already changed to \$ in the aftermath of the recent increase in property assessments or whether that can only happen after the Supervisors take their annual vote on the 2007 tax rate as part of their annual budget process. In another post, I even prepared a

user guide for the current tax rate debate

.

Regardless of the differing interpretations of state law, Mr. Drake would not have been pleased with today's budget work session held by the Board of Supervisors where the majority of the discussion focused on tax rates of \$ (the 2006 tax rate was \$). In fact, staff tailored their presentation today to reflect the fact that

Lindsay Dorrier (Scottsville)

had recently adjusted his outlook upwards on tax rates to \$. In a previous meeting, Mr. Dorrier had joined

Ken Boyd (Rivanna)

and

David Wyant (White Hall)

recommending a rate of \$, the lowest rate discussed publicly by the Board in their budget meetings, and a rate that is a full dime above the County Republican benchmark discussed at their rally this evening.

At the end of the rally, Mr. Drake encouraged citizens to return for the

Board's public hearing on the proposed tax rate being held Wednesday, April 4th

. He suggested they each resident

bring six tea bags

, one for each Supervisor, to help start an "Albemarle Tea Party." The Supervisors are expected to set a

proposed tax rate this Wednesday, March 21st. Once that rate is advertised for the public hearing, the Supervisors cannot pass a rate higher than that amount.

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Brian Wheeler