

## TAX MATTERS

MARCH 12, 2009, Issue #09-10, by Bernard Ridens, Executive Director  
Taxpayers Association of Vigo County, Inc.

7 S Meadows Shopping Center  
(812) 235-1361 [TAXTOPICS@AOL.COM](mailto:TAXTOPICS@AOL.COM) fax (812) 234-0568

1. DUMP TRUCKS – BIDDING IS OVER
2. CRACKERBARREL
3. TA BOARD MEETING
4. DUES, DUES, DUES ... ARE YOU UP TO DATE?
5. THE INMATES ARE OUT ... AND BACK IN ...
6. PUBLIC MEETINGS

### REVIEW OF PAST TAX MATTERS

MARCH 5, 2009 (#09-09)

- BIDDING WARS – SOMETHING NEW FOR THE CITY
  - The City of Terre Haute used a “reverse auction” and the web site [bidbridge.net](http://bidbridge.net) to collect bids related to the purchase of dump trucks
- INDIANA GRAD REQUIREMENTS – HB 1581 (A GOOD IDEA)
  - Finally, something good is in the making for Indiana K-12 education. It is proposed that a course in financial responsibility be required for graduation
- TEN INVESTMENT RULES
  - As an example of some great investment wisdom that’s freely available, a June 2008 *MarketWatch* article published ten investment rules developed by Bob Farrell over his many decades in the investment business

FEBRUARY 26, 2009 (#09-08)

- LEGISLATIVE ACTION NETWORK
  - Are you interested in what is happening in the Indiana Senate and House? If so, you can watch the sessions that are held on Monday and Tuesday at <http://www.in.gov/legislative/session/video.html>
- TOWNSHIP GOVERNMENT
  - The Indiana Senate passed a bill that would eliminate three-member township boards. The township boards’ duties of adopting the annual township budget and acting as the township’s fiscal and legislative body would be shifted to the county council.

The Taxpayers Association is a not-for-profit 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. DUMP TRUCKS – BIDDING IS OVER**

The reverse auction for two dump trucks for the City of Terre Haute started today (March 12) at 2:00 PM and lasted 47 minutes. Cory Masters of Bidbridge.net conducted the process. City officials were very pleased with the results. For me, it was an impressive learning experience. Since this is being written a few minutes after the fact, full details will be forthcoming next week.

## **2. CRACKERBARREL**

**We encourage you to attend the Legislative Crackerbarrel sessions – meet and talk with your area legislators. The next one is:**

**Saturday, March 14, 10:00 AM, Vigo County Main Library Lower Level**

We need to make our lawmakers aware of our thoughts. The Crackerbarrel sessions are a tremendous way of getting this done. The members of the TA are very knowledgeable and are obviously interested in the manner in which taxes are levied and spent. It would be very beneficial to our community and state if many of you would attend at least one of the remaining sessions listed below. If you are unable to attend, please send someone in your place. When our representatives return to Indianapolis, it would be beneficial if they could state that the Crackerbarrels held in Terre Haute were attended by many area citizens concerned about items under consideration by the 2009 assembly.

This week's Crackerbarrel Session is the third in the series. The other two have been well attended and the questions and comments addressed to the legislators have resulted in interesting dialogue.

Take the time this Saturday morning to stop by, say a few words if you choose, and at least have a cup of coffee.

Subsequent Crackerbarrel sessions:  
(10:00 am at the Main Branch of the Vigo County Public Library  
Lower level - rooms A, B, and C.)  
April 11

## **3. TA BOARD MEETING**

The TA Board Meeting is this coming Tuesday, March 17<sup>th</sup> at noon. It will be held at C. H. Garmong, 3050 Poplar Street. Lunch will be provided. Please respond to Bernard Ridens by 4:00 PM on Monday, the 16<sup>th</sup>.

#### **4. DUES, DUES, DUES ... ARE YOU UP TO DATE?**

Dues collection for 2009 started with the invoice mailing of December 1, 2008. At this point, we are ahead of schedule in collections by about \$825, but because of some definite non-renewals, we will not meet last year's total collection. The economy has hit some of our local businesses and they have been forced to cancel membership, or reduce their contribution. We project that by year's end, we will be short approximately 9% of our current budget. Due to this prediction, we will be forced to reduce some service to our members. At this point, we are contemplating discontinuing the quarterly production of *Tax Topics* and reducing employee hours. *Tax Topics* was initiated many years before the popularity of the Internet. Our weekly *Tax Matters* essentially replaces *Tax Topics* for all members except those not using computers.

If you have not yet paid your dues, please consider sending them in to the Taxpayers office. If you need another invoice, just let us know, and we will provide one.

#### **5. THE INMATES ARE OUT ... AND BACK IN ...**

*A satirical piece by Susan Clements*

As taxpayers, we would like to thank our sheriff and judges for releasing several inmates this week. The reduction in the number of inmates has a direct relation to the amount of tax dollars used to support the criminal justice system.

Apparently, it also gives our police department a little extra to do since some of those released have already been arrested for new ventures and sent back to continue their jail experience.

It makes us think that if only these young adults had passed the GQE (Graduation Qualifying Exam), either they would not have been in jail to begin with, or they would have been smart enough to avoid law enforcement after being released. Maybe we should give a "jail" version of the GQE – No one is released from jail, innocent or guilty, until they pass the GOOJQE (Get Out of Jail Qualifying Exam).

Of course, we would need to make an investment of thousands of dollars to develop the test, print the test, teach to the test, and grade the test. And then, when the inmate is depressed because of failure to pass the test, we would need to call in psychiatric services, at taxpayer expense, to treat the inmate.

Maybe we should just release all of the inmates and start over!

## 6. 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.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Public Meeting</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Info</u>
Thur. Mar. 12	7:00 pm	<u>City Council – Regular Meeting</u>	City Hall – Courtroom	Michelle 232-3375
<b>Sat. Mar. 14</b>	<b>10:00 am</b>	<b>LEGISLATIVE CRACKERBARREL</b>	<b>Library – Main Branch</b>	<b>Nancy 232-1113</b>
Mon. Mar. 16	5:30 pm	<u>Human Relations Commission</u>	Booker T. Washington Center	Jeff 232-0110
Mon. Mar. 16	6:30 pm	<u>County Council – Public Forum</u>	County Annex	Auditor 462-3361
Mon. Mar. 16	7:00 pm	<u>Vigo County Public Library</u>	Library – Main Branch	Nancy 232-1113
Tue. Mar. 17	9:00 am	<u>County Commissioners</u>	County Annex	Judy 462-3367
Tue. Mar. 17	10:00 am	<u>City Board of Sanitary Commissioners</u>	City Hall – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor	Sally 235-5458
<b>Tue. Mar. 17</b>	<b>12:00 pm</b>	<b>Taxpayers Association Board Meeting</b>	<b>Garmong &amp; Son, 3050 Poplar St.</b>	<b>Bernard 235-1361</b>
Wed. Mar. 18	9:30 am	<b>Clay-Owen-Vigo Solid Waste District</b>	109 E. Nat'l, Brazil IN	Janet 800-387-3380
Wed. Mar. 18	4:00 pm	<u>City Redevelopment Commission</u>	City Hall – 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor	Phenny 232-0018
Thur. Mar. 19	2:00 pm	<b>Tree Advisory Board</b>	City Hall Mayor's Conf. Room	Jennifer 232-4028
Mon. Mar. 23	2:00 pm	<u>Board of Public Works and Safety</u>	City Hall – 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor	Robin 232-4767
Mon. Mar. 23	4:00 pm	<u>County Park Board</u>	County Annex	Julia 462-3391
Mon. Mar. 23	5:30 pm	<b>Terre Haute Housing Authority</b>	2001 N. 19 <sup>th</sup> Street	
Mon. Mar. 23	7:00 pm	<u>Vigo County School Board</u>	VCSC Board Room	Judy 462-4216
Tue. Mar. 24	9:00 am	<u>County Commissioners</u>	County Annex	Judy 462-3367
Tue. Mar. 24	4:30 pm	<u>County Council</u>	County Annex	Auditor 462-3361
Wed. Mar. 25	4:30 pm	<u>City Park Board – Business Meeting</u>	Deming Park	Eddie 232-2727
Wed. Mar. 25	5:30 pm	<u>Information Technology Advisory Board</u>	City Hall – 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor	Brad 244-2316
Wed. Mar. 25	7:00 pm	<u>Airport Authority</u>	Airport	Kara 877-2524
Tue. Mar. 31	9:00 am	<u>County Commissioners</u>	County Annex	Judy 462-3367
Wed. Apr. 1	9:00 am	<u>City Board of Zoning Appeals</u>	City Hall – 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor Conf. Room	Judy 462-3367
Wed. Apr. 1	7:00 pm	<u>County Area Planning Commission</u>	County Annex	Vickie 462-3354
Thur. Apr. 2	7:00 pm	<u>City Council – Sunshine Meeting</u>	City Hall – Courtroom	Michelle 232-3375

**END**

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