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## Solar House Pipes Burst - Minimum 3 Cuts

I just read about the damage caused in the Solar House the city received because somebody forgot to winterize it or if there were no plans to winterize it, check up on it during the winter. The pipes burst and there was water damage done to the tune of \$16,000. According to Ron Hynd, the city is looking for a grant to repair the damage. Good luck. It's one thing to seek a grant to restore old buildings that time has aged, it's another to seek money to repair a "NEW" building damaged through "Professional" negligence. I had to use the word "Professional" since that is all I hear from the city council concerning our staff. We have good staff but so do alot of cities. But according to the city council, ours are the best. If they are the best, this should not have happened, at least not the first year of owning the building. If they are good but not the best, then mistakes happen. I have always said we have good some people working for the city but we also have some that are just so so.

On another subject, what do you think of the city's new minimum 3 cut policy for grass cutting in right of ways? Don't be fooled by the "minimum" in front of the 3. It actually can be viewed as a maximum. All the city is saying is that they will cut it at least 3 times, not necessarily more. To cut the grass once a month would require 6 cuts during the growing season. That was the city's old policy. Why would they change the minimum cuts from 6 to 3 unless they didn't plan on cutting more than 3 times. If you cut your grass on your property only once a month, you would receive from the city a notice that your grass is in violation of the height requirements. So as you drive around town along the major roadways, what do you think the city would do to you if you let your grass grow as the city is doing? You would be cited for being in violation of the property maintenance code, but not the City of Troy.

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May 10

## Here they go again. Charter amendment, what Charter amendment?

I am amazed, just simply amazed at management's attempt to set up (or fabricate as some would say) a situation where they think they can circumvent the city charter by adding another "Be it further resolved" to the 2009/10 budget resolution to be voted upon May 11, 2009. This was in response to Councilwoman Beltrami's question concerning the impact of lowering the Capital portion of the City Tax rate (as it relates to the City Charter and the recently passed charter amendment).

They are adding the words:

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the 2009/10 budget uses 8.03 of the maximum 8.10 millage rate levy, which was passed by the voters in 2008 with the Charter amendment adding Section 9.16.5 to the City Charter."

Do they really think adding these words will override the City Charter? Do they really think that adding this verbiage makes the recent requirements of the charter amendment go away? If this resolution passes as worded, the new current rate that goes into effect July 1, 2009 will be 8.03 mills. On that date, the current rate actually imposed, levied, and collected by the city will be 8.03 mills. Next year, should council want to raise it back to 8.10 mills, the current rate actually imposed, levied, and collected today, would require a vote by the City electors to raise it back. These additional words in the resolution will have no impact. If on July 1, 2009, the city lowers the millage rate from 8.10 to 8.03 that will be the new current rate as authorized under the charter. Any future increase above 8.03 will require a vote of the City electors unless Section 9.16.5 is changed by the voters or ruled invalid by the courts.

But we know that government agencies don't have to follow the rule of law. Just look at what the State Tax Commission does with the laws they enforce. They don't unless they want to. Not only that, they are requiring Brownfield Authorities to VIOLATE the law at their insistence. That is why I recently voted against our TBRA proposed 2009/10 budget since it requires us to collect taxes we cannot legally collect. They have instructed our City to collect them regardless. More about that issue later on.

Just for your reference, Section 9.16.5 of the city charter states:

"The Council shall not increase the millage rate imposed pursuant to Section 9.16 of this charter above a current rate actually imposed, levied, and collected unless the increased rate shall be first approved by a majority of the City electors voting on the question."

My comments are based on the memo listed on the city web site for Late Submittals for C-01 as of 5:00 PM Sunday, May 10, 2009.

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