

and agreements in connection with the security and payment of said Bonds; authorizing the execution of a Loan and Pledge Agreement and other loan documents with the Louisiana Department of Health; providing for the delivery of the Bonds to

Handheld readers for a total of \$64,616 to new account Meters and Boxes.

2. Reallocation for Traffic Consultant - \$60,000 from Account 20415-05142 Ridgecrest Fremaux Drainage to Account 20417-07114 Traffic Con-

Slidell Independent / Feb. 27, 2020

Letters to the Editor

Why won't voters approve additional taxes?

Editor,

I think business minded voters realize that both St. Tammany and the State of Louisiana have the same problem. The parish and the state both enjoyed the slush of unexpected sales tax revenue following Hurricane Katrina restoration and simply found ways to spend it. Results were new office space, higher salaries, additional employees and expanded benefits packages. Then when sales tax hit 10% it was "game over." Blame that on Governor Edwards. Voters had enough and now won't vote for any taxes.

In recent years the influx of new residents less impacted by homestead exemption have contributed to a permanent increase in the tax base. They have more expendable income and pay more in property taxes. Again, business minded voters know the parish is receiving more in taxes these days because of population growth.

St. Tammany is one of the highest taxed parishes in one of the highest taxed states in the nation and yet the money is consumed within it's overhead with too little left over for doing work for the tax

payers. Until recently the St. Tammany parish public works department was rarely seen doing anything in the unincorporated eastern part of the parish. That contributed to voter apathy.

Streets had embarrassing potholes and striping had faded away. They did not bother to change the lights on the interstate and even just let the light fixtures fall off the poles. It is still a rare occasion to see a public works vehicle, much less doing anything. And neighborhoods are intimidated into maintaining the medians on public streets. You just don't see that level of neglect elsewhere. In Jefferson, Kenner and the Mississippi gulf coast you will always see public works vehicles maintaining and repairing whatever is needed to keep public property in good shape.

Several things need to be done to fix the revenue problem.

The first step is comparing yourself to other areas and realizing there is a problem.

A lot of the problem is with dedicated taxes. "We" foolishly seem to vote that way. We need an unbiased, non-political, office of independent inspector general. The inspector general's

primary mission would be to review the allocation and funding appropriateness of the various parish agencies. The end goal would be a ballot proposal to reallocate dedicated taxes based upon a needs and appropriateness basis.

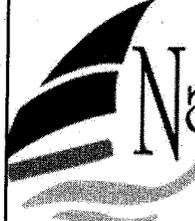
In today's political environment it's flabbergasting that so many people do not understand how money is created. Business creates the jobs and the money. More business equals more money. One ignored opportunity would be to develop the Slidell lakefront.

Maybe it's time to put back on the ballot the issue of a Lakefront Casino as a tax revenue generator. All too many St. Tammany residents go to Mississippi to spend their excess income. Let's think about why they go to Mississippi and fix that. Our residents should be given the opportunity of spending their money at home where it benefits us instead of taking it out of state. The permit for a casino could be linked to the requirement that they build a beachfront barrier island for public recreation which would also help with storm surge.

Lee Longstreet

LEGISLATIVE COMMENTS AND REPORTS

Councilwoman Denham will host District A meeting on Wednesday, February 12, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. in the



Nathan's Restaurant

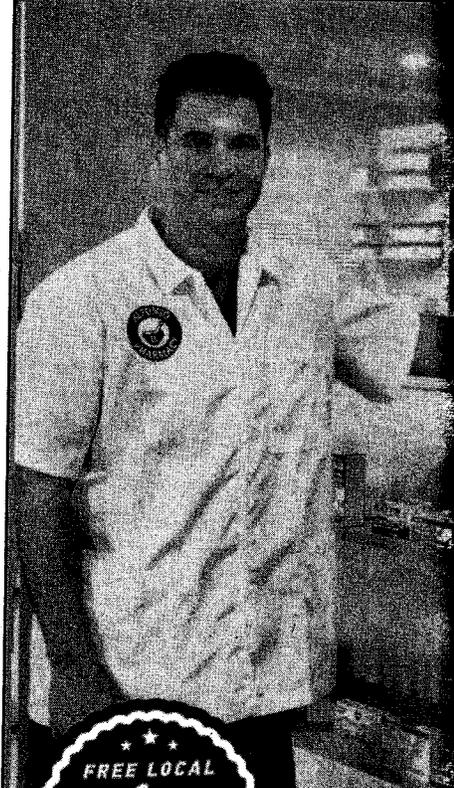
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Tues-Thurs 11am-9pm
Fri & Sat 11am-10pm

Tom Fitzmorris ra



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