

COUNTY OF MARQUETTE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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MARQUETTE, MICHIGAN 49855

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October 20, 1980

NOTE: FOWARDED TO NEW MEDIA AND VARIOUS AREA SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

Among the tax proposals which will appear on the ballot this November, there is County Proposal I - Separate Tax Limitation. This Proposal is not a tax increase, but simply proposes a specific division and individual limitations of the total 15 mills which is divided yearly between townships, schools and the county by state law.

With all the attention being paid the State tax proposals, it is possible that the County proposal will get "lost in the shuffle" or will be misunderstood. It is for this reason that our Committee was established to provide education and information on this proposal.

I'm listing the members of our Committee below for your information. Please feel free to contact any one of them if you wish information, speakers, etc., and that will be arranged.

In the meantime if you have any questions about the Committee, do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Elaine Juidici

Elaine Juidici, Chairperson
Marquette County Separate Tax
Limitation Education Committee

/klc

Sally May	(249-1321)	Keith Forsberg	(226-2196)	Ken Tuominen	(486-9213)
Tim Lowe	(228-8216)	Louis Myefski	(225-0806)	Wes Larson	(475-4341)
Elaine Juidici	(475-4575)	OraJane Kennedy	(376-8229)	Earl Yelle	(346-5669)

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M E M O R A N D U M

TO: County Board Members
County Clerk
Controller
Chief Civil Counsel

FROM: Elaine Juidici
Tim Lowe
Sally May

RE: Proposed Brochure to Provide Information on Separate Tax
Limitation Ballot Proposal

DATE: September 30, 1980

The Separate Tax Limitation Education Committee is in the process of designing a brochure of information on the November ballot question. Before this is finalized, we are asking that school administrators, township supervisors, county board members, and others review the draft. We are fast approaching a deadline for printing, etc., and would appreciate it if you would review these questions and return them with your comments and suggestions to one of us tomorrow night.

It has been agreed that the expense of the brochure will be shared by the schools, townships and county. Because of the time schedule we must follow to get these printed and distributed, it is our intent to request that the Board pass a budget amendment resolution tomorrow to cover the County's share of this expense.

If you have any questions, we will try to answer them.

/klc

Attachment

Permanized

DRAFT

QUESTIONS TO BE INCLUDED IN BROCHURE OF INFORMATION
ON SEPARATE TAX LIMITATION PROPOSAL

IS THIS A TAX INCREASE?

No! State law sets a 15 mill limitation to be divided between schools, townships and the county.

IF THIS IS NOT AN INCREASE, WHY ARE WE VOTING ON IT?

The 15 mills set by state law is currently divided by the County Allocation Board.

WHAT GOVERNMENTAL UNITS ARE IN FAVOR OF THE PROPOSAL?

All school, township, city and county units have expressed their support for this proposal.

HOW IS THIS DIFFERENT FROM THE WAY IT'S DONE NOW?

Each year the County Allocation Board meets several times and reviews budgets of the various units to come to an agreement on how the mills should be divided. If Proposal _____ is adopted, the costs of convening the Allocation Board will be eliminated.

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF THE 15 MILLS WILL THE COUNTY, EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT AND EACH TOWNSHIP RECEIVE?

(A pie chart would be included here showing the percentages.)

WHY AREN'T THE CITIES AND CHARTER TOWNSHIPS INCLUDED?

The Cities and Charter Townships are not included in the division of the 15 mills because they receive their operating money by authority of the charters that have been passed by their electorate.

WILL TAXPAYERS IN THE CITIES PAY THE 1.370 FOR TOWNSHIPS?

No! Taxpayers living in Marquette, Ishpeming, Negaunee and the Charter Township of Chocolay do not pay the 1.370 as listed for townships and this will not change. These jurisdictions levy millage for operating as authorized by their electorate under separate charter.

WHEN WILL THIS TAKE EFFECT IF IT IS PASSED?

This proposal will take effect _____.

IF THIS IS PASSED, WILL THE MAXIMUM 15 MILLS ALWAYS BE LEVIED?

Not necessarily. At present, under the Headlee Amendment, each unit levies less than the amount allocated, by a specific formula which varies from year to year depending on the economy, property assessments, etc. The amounts listed in the proposal are limitations and cannot be exceeded.

WILL THIS PROPOSAL GIVE TAXPAYERS MORE CONTROL OVER TAXES?

Yes! Under the current Allocation Board system, the maximum 15 mills (minus the Headlee formula) is always levied because units are reluctant to ask for less in any given year than their previous year because they may jeopardize that amount in the following year. Also, if one unit requests less in a given year one of the other units will request that portion, and so on. The net result of this process is always a maximum levy.

If this proposal passes, each unit (i.e. county, school districts, and townships) have individual maximum limitation. Taxpayers know how much each unit may levy of the 15 mills and can go directly to that board to request a tax reduction. That township, school or county board becomes directly responsible to the taxpayers for their action (or inaction!) in reducing taxes. Under the Allocation Board system, the responsibility is diluted and it is virtually impossible for taxpayers to have an effect on the 15 mills.

WHY ARE THE SCHOOLS, COUNTY, TOWNSHIPS AND CITIES IN FAVOR OF THE PROPOSAL?

If each unit knows what their authorized millage rate is each year, budget guesswork can be reduced. Also, the Allocation Board process has caused hard feelings among units at a time when all units should be cooperating to maximize services and minimize costs. In addition, a great deal of administrative and decision-making time could be saved by eliminating the yearly allocation process.

CAN THE DIVISION OF THE 15 MILLS BE CHANGED IN THE FUTURE?

Yes, but only by a vote of the people. These tax limitations will apply until they are altered by another vote of the people.

WHAT DOES THE PARENTHETICAL STATEMENT FOLLOWING "SCHOOLS" MEAN?

(The committee has consulted with the Prosecuting Attorney on this question and is waiting for an interpretation.)

Minutes

SEPARATE TAX LIMITATION EDUCATION COMMITTEE

September 29, 1980

7:00 p.m.

Courthouse

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Elaine Juidici.

Present: Orajane Kennedy, Keith Forsberg and Lou Myefski (schools),
Tim Lowe, Elaine Juidici and Sally May (county), and
Ken Touminen (townships).

Absent: Wes Larson and Earl Yelle (townships).

COMMUNICATIONS:

The Committee reviewed and discussed the following communications:

1. Memo to School Superintendents from Lou Myefski notifying them of legal counsel's opinion that Superintendents should register as a "committee" with the County Clerk as an advocate of the ballot proposal; that Boards of Education may legally pass resolutions of support on the issue; and that public funds may not be used to campaign for an affirmative or negative vote.
2. Letter from Republic-Michigamme Schools endorsing the proposal.
3. Letter from Marquette Schools endorsing the proposal.
4. Letter from Richard Klahn (Marquette Schools Superintendent) stating that he will cooperate with MAISD in any way possible to promote the proposal.
5. Notice from NICE Schools that they are supporting the proposal.

Touminen noted that all townships in the County are in favor of the proposal and each Board will pass a resolution to that effect. The Townships Association Planner is prepared to contact all townships.

There was some discussion about whether Committee members should file with the County Clerk. Chief Civil Counsel Micklow will be asked for her opinion.

WORDING ON BALLOT:

Juidici reported that County Chief Civil Counsel Micklow stated that the ballot proposal must be stated as written in the State statute. (Attached to 9-8-80 minutes.)

The Committee noted that there are some misspellings on the copy of the ballot proposal that was provided for the Committee's information. Juidici will contact the County Clerk on this, and Micklow will be contacted to explain the parenthetical statement on the ballot following "schools".

Separate Tax Limitation
Education Committee
September 29, 1980
Page 2

BROCHURE:

The Committee then proceeded to review the draft questions for the informational brochure.

Re the parenthetical statement following "schools", the Committee was not entirely sure of the meaning, and after making that determination, will include a question and answer in the brochure for explanation. The Committee felt that probably no school districts in Marquette County would be affected by this statement, and if this is so, the following questions and answers might be used in the brochure:

WHAT SCHOOLS, CITIES AND TOWNSHIPS IN MARQUETTE COUNTY WILL BE AFFECTED BY THIS STATEMENT?

None.

IF NONE ARE AFFECTED, WHY IS IT ON THE BALLOT?

State statute provides specific wording for Separate Tax Limitation proposals, and must be included even if it does not apply.

Myefski felt that it might be possible to put a statement on the ballot itself stating that this statement does not apply. There was some question whether this was so. Micklow will be requested to give an opinion on the matter.

It was decided that it would be desirable to have schools, townships, the county, and perhaps union leadership review the draft questions to give their comments before the brochure was finalized. Touminen agreed to contact the Townships Association Planner and ask him to reach union officials. Myefski will notify schools and Juidici, May and Lowe will notify County Board members.

It was agreed that October 22 should be the deadline for having the brochure available.

Re the design of the brochure, it was agreed that it should be printed on 8½" x 11" paper (buff color if possible) and folded as if to be placed in an envelope. There were several different suggestions about the cover design so the Committee members were asked to come to the next meeting with samples of how they would like it to be designed, and what information should be included. May will contact printers for cost estimates and bring samples of paper if possible.

All draft questions were reviewed and some changes were made. Micklow will be asked for her opinion on when the proposal will take effect if it is passed.

Separate Tax Limitation
Education Committee
September 29, 1980
Page 3

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be on October 7 at 4:00 p.m. with the following agenda:

- Review questions and comments on questions from others
- Review information requested from Micklow
- Determine how many brochures to be printed, and how they will be distributed
- Discuss use of media in getting information on the proposal to the electorate

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sally May (klc)
Sally May

/klc

Minutes

SEPARATE TAX LIMITATION EDUCATION COMMITTEE

September 8, 1980

7:00 p.m.

Courthouse

The meeting was called to order by convenor Elaine Juidici.

Present: Orajane Kennedy, Lou Myefski and Keith Forsberg (schools)
Tim Lowe, Sally May and Elaine Juidici (county)
Wes Larson and Ken Tuominen (townships)

Absent: Earl Yelle (townships)

The committee was provided copies of two memos from Chief Civil Counsel re PROCEDURE FOR SUBMITTING SEPARATE TAX LIMITATIONS ADOPTED BY THE TAX ALLOCATION BOARD TO ELECTORS OF THE COUNTY and LEGALITY OF COUNTY SEPARATE TAX LIMITATION BALLOT PROPOSAL. Also wording for the ballot was reviewed as submitted by the County Clerk in accordance with the statute.

Juidici explained that she had been named as convenor by Chairperson Farrell for the purpose of starting the meeting but that it would be necessary to elect a permanent chairperson. It was moved, seconded and carried unanimously to elect Juidici as permanent chairperson. May volunteered to take minutes.

Larson questioned whether it would be mandatory to use the wording as presented to the committee. He stated that the wording will be important to ensure that voters do not misunderstand the purpose and intent of the question. After some discussion it was agreed that the committee would find out whether other wording could be used.

Discussion was held on the various ways information could be provided on the issue, including radio, t.v., newspaper and handout(s), perhaps in the form of an information brochure.

It was emphasized that according to the Chief Civil Counsel the County Board would be restricted to spending money on educational material only and that such material could not advocate a "yes" or "no" vote on the issue. The representatives from the schools and townships agreed that they would investigate what restrictions they might have in spending funds for this purpose.

The committee then studied the proposed wording for the ballot proposal trying to determine what questions voters might have -- such questions with answers could be included in a brochure.

The following questions and answers were identified for a draft to be discussed at the next meeting of the committee:

IS THIS A TAX INCREASE?

No! State law sets a 15 mill limitation to be divided between schools, townships and the county.

IF THIS IS NOT AN INCREASE, WHY ARE WE VOTING ON IT?

The 15 mills set by state law is currently divided up by the County Allocation Board which is made up of representatives of schools, townships, the county and the largest city (Marquette).

WHAT GOVERNMENTAL UNITS ARE IN FAVOR OF THE PROPOSAL?

All school, township, city and county units have expressed their support for this proposal.

HOW IS THIS DIFFERENT FROM THE WAY IT'S DONE NOW?

Each year the County Allocation Board meets several times and reviews budgets of the various units to come to an agreement on how the mills should be divided. This process, which will no longer be necessary if the proposal is adopted, costs the taxpayers approximately \$_____ each year in the form of direct and indirect costs.

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF THE 15 MILLS WILL THE COUNTY, EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT AND EACH TOWNSHIP RECEIVE?

(A pie chart would be included here showing the percentages.)

WHY AREN'T THE CITIES AND CHARTER TOWNSHIPS INCLUDED?

The Cities and Charter Townships are not included in the division of the 15 mills because they receive their operating money by authority of the charters that have been passed by their electorate.

WILL TAXPAYERS IN THE CITIES PAY THE 1.370 FOR TOWNSHIPS?

No! Taxpayers living in Marquette, Ishpeming, Negaunee and the Charter Township of Chocolay do not pay the 1.370 as listed for townships and this will not change. These jurisdictions levy millage for operating as authorized by their electorate under separate "charter".

WHEN WILL THIS TAKE EFFECT IF IT IS PASSED?

This proposal will take effect next year (1981).

IF THIS IS PASSED, WILL THE MAXIMUM 15 MILLS ALWAYS BE LEVIED?

Not necessarily. At present, under the Headlee amendment, each unit levies less than the amount allocated, by a specific formula which varies from year to year depending on the economy, property assessments, etc. The amounts listed in the proposal are limitations and cannot be exceeded.

WILL THIS PROPOSAL GIVE TAXPAYERS MORE CONTROL OVER TAXES?

Yes! Under the current Allocation Board system the maximum 15 mills (minus the Headlee formula) is always levied because units are reluctant to ask for less in any given year than their previous year because they may jeopardize that amount in the following year. Also, if one unit requests less in a given year one of the other units will request that portion and so on. The net result of this process is always a maximum levy.

If this proposal passes, each unit (i.e. county, school districts, and townships) have individual maximum limitation. Taxpayers know how much they may levy of the 15 mills and can go directly to that board to request a tax reduction. That township, school or county board becomes directly responsible to the taxpayers for their action (or inaction!) in reducing taxes. Under the Allocation Board system, the responsibility is diluted and it is virtually impossible for taxpayers to have an effect on the 15 mills.

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CAN THE DIVISION OF THE 15 MILLS BE CHANGED IN THE FUTURE?

Yes, but only by a vote of the people. These tax limitations will apply until they are altered by another vote of the people.

Separate Tax Limitation
Education Committee
September 8, 1980
Page 4

WHAT DOES THE PARENTHETICAL STATEMENT FOLLOWING "SCHOOLS" MEAN?

(explanation)

The committee members agreed to come to the next meeting with information from their Boards about what each unit is willing to do to help the information effort. This help might include press releases, resolutions of support and appropriations to help in the cost of printing a brochure. Also, each group will bring information to help determine how many brochures would be needed.

The next meeting will be on September 29 at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sally May (k)

Sally May

/klc

MARQUETTE COUNTY

Local Proposals

Separate Tax Limitation

Shall separate tax limitations be established for an indefinite period, or until altered by the voters of the County, for the County of Marquette and the townships and school districts within the county, the aggregate of which shall not exceed 15.000 mills as follows:

County of Marquette	6.375 mills
Townships	1.370 mills
Intermediate School Districts	.230 mills
School districts (a school district located entirely within a city or charter township shall receive an additional millage equal to the township millage)	<u>7.025 mills</u>
Total	15.000 mills

Yes _____

No _____