

Truth in Taxation Public Hearing

Thursday, August 21, 2025 6:00 PM

Garfield County Courthouse, 55 S Main St., Panguitch, UT 84759

I. Call to Order

II. Statement of Purpose

Lane introduced the topic of the truth in taxation hearing. He provided an overview of the amount of the increase, what the funds will be used for, and discussed the reasons the increase is taking place.

III. Public Comment

Public Comment: Bill Wepner

- Bill Wepner questions the increase in revenue and the definition of a certified tax rate.
- He argues that the increase in revenue is not in line with the definition of a certified tax rate, which should remain stable.
- Wepner mentions his experience on the board and the historical trend of lowering school taxes.
- He questions the need for the \$1.07 million increase and suggests bonding for capital expenditures.

Public Comment: Brenda Beckler

- Brenda Beckler expresses concerns about the impact of increasing taxes on local residents, particularly those on fixed incomes.
- She suggests exploring other funding options like cutting unnecessary expenditure or seeking private funding.
- Beckler asks for details on how the taxes will be used and mentions a neighbor's concerns about building a cabin due to increased taxes.

Public Comment: Steve Garrett

- Steve Garrett presents his tax bill and questions the significant increase in taxes.
- He argues that the increase is not in line with the state's truth in taxation law, which should decrease rates with increasing property values.
- Garrett mentions his recent conversation with the state about the truth in taxation law and the need for adjustments.
- He suggests the district should cut back on expenses and not expect taxpayers to bear the burden.

Public Comment: Harshad Desai

- Desai emphasizes the importance of adhering to the state's truth in taxation law.
- He argues that the increase in property values should result in a decrease in tax rates to maintain revenue neutrality.
- Desai suggests the district should address the

issue with the county commission if the state's law is not being followed.

- He mentions the significant increase in property values and the need for adjustments in tax rates.

Public Comment: Nathaniel Colt

- Nathaniel Colt expresses his support for the homework and knowledge brought to the meeting by other speakers.
- He shares his personal experience with property tax increases and the impact on his budget.
- Colt suggests the district should cut back on expenses and not expect taxpayers to bear the burden.
- He mentions his intention to hire an attorney to grieve the tax increase and possibly change his residency.

Public Comment: Steve Lambert

- Steve Lambert shares his experience with property tax increases and the impact on his properties.
- He questions the significant increase in taxable value for properties with no improvements.
- Lambert mentions his properties in Sky Valley and the increase in taxable value despite no changes.
- He expresses frustration with the increase and the lack of understanding behind the calculations.

Public Comment: Shannon Fawson

- Shannon Fawson compares the school district to a public company and questions its financial management.
- She mentions her frustration with the increase in taxes and the lack of transparency in the district's financial decisions.
- Fawson suggests the district should cut back on expenses and not expect taxpayers to bear the burden.
- She expresses her intention to take further action if the tax increase is not addressed.

Public Comment: Brent Night

- Brent Night shared his experience with the tax increase on his summer home property.
- He asked for clarification on the need to build a new middle school.

Public Comment: Justin Whitlock

- Justin Whitlock shared his concerns regarding the recent property tax increase.
- He encouraged the board to explore alternative options to help offset costs rather than raising the tax rate.
- He expressed frustration with overtaxation and asked the board to work collaboratively with citizens to identify solutions other than increasing taxes.

Public Comment: Lance Syrett

- Lance Syrett expressed his disappointment with the tax increase and shared how it will personally impact him.
- He asked whether the district had discussed the tax rate with the county government.
- He requested clarification regarding the additional one million dollars.
- He voiced frustration over the tax increase, noting that other states are considering eliminating property taxes altogether.

Public Comment: Denise Payne

- Denise Payne shared her frustration with the tax increase and the size of the increase this year.
- She asked why the tax rate had not been raised gradually over the past several years and requested clarification on where the additional funds will be allocated.

Lane addressed many of the comments made by audience members including the total dollar figure, the uses of funds, and other matters.

Board members commented on the truth in taxation situation and their positions on the matter.

IV. Board Action Item

IV.A. Tax Rate

Curtis made a motion to ratify the rates as presented.

The motion was seconded by Jared. The motion passed 4-1 with Ralph voting Nay.

V. Adjournment