

Voters' Pamphlet

February 8, 2022 Special Election
City of Vancouver



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For the complete text of the resolutions, please visit:
clark.wa.gov/elections/february-8-2022-special-election-0

You must sign and date your return envelope in order for your ballot to be counted!

- Sign in the signature box that has YOUR name printed on the envelope.
- If you registered to vote online, or when you obtained your driver's license, the signature on your driver's license is the signature in your voter registration record.
- If you are unsure about the signature in your voter registration record, we encourage you to call the Elections Office at 564-397-2345. We can provide a description of the signature you used when you registered to vote.
- Do NOT sign someone else's name, even if you have power of attorney.
- Voting over the phone by having someone else fill out and sign your ballot is against the law. Voters can call us at 564-397-2345 to learn about the options for voting while they are out of town.
- Drop boxes are available if you don't want your signature to go through the mail. List of drop box locations can be found on blue instruction sheet.



Published by the
Clark County Auditor's Office

Proposition No. 2

Fire and Emergency Services and Facilities Levy Lid Lift

The City Council of the City of Vancouver adopted Resolution No. M-4155 concerning a levy lid lift to fund fire and emergency services. This proposition would fund only fire and emergency services, including additional firefighters, equipment, and construction and seismic retrofitting of facilities to improve response times. This proposition would increase the City’s regular property tax by \$0.50/\$1,000 assessed valuation; not exceeding a total rate of \$2.56/\$1,000 for collection in 2023. The 2023 levy amount, less expiring levies, will be the permanent basis to calculate subsequent levies, per RCW 84.55. Qualifying seniors, veterans, and others would be exempt, per RCW 84.36.

Should this proposition be approved?

Yes No

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

The City of Vancouver has proposed a ballot measure to fund improvements to fire and emergency services. If approved, this proposition would authorize an increase to the City’s regular property tax levy by \$0.50/\$1,000 assessed valuation, not to exceed a total rate of \$2.56/\$1,000 for collection in 2023. Increased revenues would fund additional personnel to improve response times, equipment, the replacement and seismic retrofitting of fire stations, and other enhancements to fire and emergency services. The 2023 levy amount would be used to calculate subsequent levies, per RCW 84.55. Qualifying seniors, veterans and others would be exempt, per RCW 84.36.

STATEMENT FOR

Our firefighters and paramedics save lives and protect property. The City of Vancouver is asking voters to lift the levy lid for our fire and emergency services to hire additional firefighters and paramedics, construct and seismicly retrofit facilities, buy additional and updated equipment.

VFD responses totaled 29,605 in 2020, over 81 responses per day, and 67% of those were emergency medical incidents. VFD serves over 288,000 individuals within the 89 square miles that includes 22 miles of shoreline and one million square feet of dockside warehouses and facilities. 1500 ocean-going vessels visited those facilities in 2020 and our railways transport hazardous materials including crude oil and ethanol.

VFD covers the Regional 911 Dispatch Center, the emergency radio tower system, and the BPA complex with its high voltage capacity from 31 dams, 15,000 miles of electrical lines and 260 substations. VFD covers natural gas pipelines, eleven main water stations, 40 wells and two hospitals that serve over 110,000 emergency patients a year.

We’re facing high-risk natural disasters including an active volcano, earthquakes, flooding, landslides, wildfires, and extreme weather. The VFD needs trained personnel and equipment to ensure community protection and firefighter safety. This levy lift will provide for these necessary services. Please vote yes on Proposition 2. The amount is \$0.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. If passed, an owner of a \$440,000 house would pay \$18.33 per month starting in 2023. More than ever, we need these vital services for our community.

Submitted by:

Mary Elkin
Bart Hansen
Anne McEnerny-Ogle
Vfdfirelevy2022@gmail.com

REBUTTAL OF STATEMENT AGAINST

This levy is permanent because the need to hire and retain additional firefighters to improve the safety of our community is permanent. Other revenue sources are insufficient, unreliable, temporary or unsustainable over the long term, or they are dedicated by law to other purposes and cannot be used for fire and EMS services. This levy will provide a dedicated sustainable source of funding for these critical services to our community. Vote yes on Proposition 2.

STATEMENT AGAINST

\$.50/\$1000 of assessed value more. The median home price in 2021 is \$439,000 (was \$399,000 in 2020). That’s another \$219.50 per year. Not much right? What are the not telling you?

The increase is permanent. (1) Why doesn’t it sunset? (2) They can raise taxes 1% per year, however, new construction income is on top of the 1%...which they don’t tell you. The average increase average per year for each of the past 5 years is 3.12% or triple what they claim; (3) There is \$8 million in unplanned revenue that isn’t allocated; (4) The city is getting \$33 million in Covid funds to use that they aren’t talking about; (5) Clark County’s property taxes are the 3rd highest in the State; (6) Look at the last report on taxes: <https://www.vancouverannualreport.org/property-taxes>; (7) Just a few years ago Vancouver School District got you to approve nearly \$1 billion for new schools; (8) 2020 City Utility Tax Rate: 28.9%. \$41.99mm in utility taxes collected in 2020; (9) \$8.4 million in affordable housing taxes; (10) \$40 per car fee (\$5.5 million); (11) 8.5% sales tax; (12) Inflation in the last 12 months is over 7% and the highest in 30+ years and projected to go higher; (13) Capital gains tax coming? (14) New payroll tax; (15) New real estate excise tax.

They have more than enough revenue on hand to pay for the fire work but just want more. Is your income increasing as fast as all the taxes? Vote No.

Submitted by:

Richard Rylander
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REBUTTAL OF STATEMENT FOR

67% of the calls are for medical. A large percent of those calls don’t need a fire response when AMR would do. Revise the 911 call procedures and save millions. Citing natural disaster potential as a reason for more spending is ridiculous. What do you need to give up to pay this bill? They actually get triple the revenue they claim. Make them use existing money and stop soaking the taxpayers. Vote No.