

What Phoenix citizens can do to help:

In working to balance its budget, Phoenix has:

- Imposed a new 2 percent food tax
- Boosted water rate hikes as much as 60 percent over the past 5 years
- Reduced service levels at parks, senior centers, library, business services, etc.
- Slapped higher fees on businesses trying to expand
- Refused to disclose the amount of employee raises until two months after the budget was approved.

Yet the city still refuses to address its No. 1 budget issue: a work force averaging about \$100,000 in annual compensation in a community where taxpayers earn about half of that.

I believe that the city continues to live in a fantasy world that is unsustainable, and the city is whistling past the fiscal graveyard. This is despite many pleas from my office to reduce our out-of-control labor costs and put more functions out for managed competition. I'm convinced now that nothing will be done until the citizens demand that more forcefully.

What can you do? Here's a list:

Most importantly, **register and vote**. City elections get relatively low turn-out because they are on odd-numbered years outside of the traditional congressional election cycle. They often are decided by a few thousand votes, sometimes a few hundred. That means the city's 14,000-plus employees can have an overwhelming influence on the outcomes. Register and vote, please.

How to register to vote:

Call 602-506-1511, T.D.D. 602-506-2348 or use the link below:
http://recorder.maricopa.gov/pdf/Voter_registration_fillable_form.pdf

Or go to: <http://recorder.maricopa.gov/web/regform.aspx>

Or <http://www.servicearizona.com/>

Tell your friends and neighbors. Forward the messages and newsletters you get to your email list so others know what's going on. Doing so with a note from you will make even more people pay attention. Here's a sample message:

From Bob Smith: Please look over the attached. I can't believe the city is spending our money so cavalierly. Please forward this information to others.

Connect to us on facebook: Go to <http://www.facebook.com/DiCiccioSal> and like the page. We send out new information there regularly. Forward and share that information with your friends.

Tell your neighborhood, school and other local organizations what's going on and forward email and newsletters to those groups, asking them to forward them to their memberships. You also could send us those organizations' contact information (to council.district.6@phoenix.gov) in case we don't have them on our list.

Sign up for **our electronic newsletter** so you know what is happening in the city that affects your lives and pocketbooks. Remember that the city raised food taxes with no more than the constitutionally required 24-hour notice so citizens couldn't rally in opposition, so sometimes you need to let your voice be heard quickly. That requires being informed early and often.

Sign up by calling 602-262-7491 or emailing council.district.6@phoenix.gov

To sign up directly, go to <http://phoenix.gov/subscribe/dist6subscribe.html>

Send us relevant articles, preferably with a link, so we can share them on our website with a larger audience.

Ask the councilman to speak at your community groups and neighborhood meetings about the city's financial picture. We might not be able to attend them all, but we can't go to the ones we don't know about. So please let us know about your groups and when they meet.

Ask candidates and Council members at public meetings if they support adding taxes and fees to taxpayers and businesses while employees who average \$100,000 a year continue to get raises.

SAVE THIS notice so you will have it handy should (when) other issues surface like the food tax that requires early and sizeable support or opposition.

Contact us at council.district.6@phoenix.gov or 602-262-7491 to tell us what you think or to offer ideas. I will make sure the rest of the City Council knows how you think.

Phoenix City Councilman Sal DiCiccio represents District 6, which includes Ahwatukee, Arcadia, Biltmore, East Camelback and North Central. He can be reached at council.district.6@phoenix.gov or 602-262-7491