



CITY OF DECATUR ILLINOIS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 19, 2022

City Council sets property tax levy, approves tech upgrades for Police, extends leadership program

Decatur, IL – Highlights from the December 19, 2022 Decatur City Council meeting include the setting of the Property Tax Levy, the approval of technology upgrades to support Public Safety, and an extension of a successful leadership program with the Tjaty Group.

Property Tax Levy

On Monday night, the Decatur City Council set the City's Property Tax Levy to be payable in July and September 2023. Although most Decatur property owners will see a level or slightly decreased amount of taxes due to the City, the levy will increase about 2.5 percent versus the prior year in order to capture the value of new construction and recent annexations.

The Mayor and City Council members said it was important the City holds the impact on taxpayers as flat as possible during these times of economic hardship, while also funding a portion of the City's obligations on fire & police pensions, the Decatur Public Library, a portion of general obligation bonded debt, and the Decatur Municipal Band.

Equalized Assessed Value (EAV) is projected to be up 4.2 percent in Decatur, but the City's levy will not completely capture the increased value. Based on the projected EAV, the City's property tax rate will be \$1.66303 per \$100 of assessed value. This is a slight reduction from \$1.69080 per \$100 of assessed value from last year's rate. The City Council's restraint will likely not be overall impactful as other taxing bodies have increased their levy this year. The Council's action keeps the City's levy at approximately 15 percent of the total property tax bill. Public Safety pensions comprise nearly three-fourths of the total City property tax levy, and the percentage increases every year. The City will use the General Fund budget to subsidize these costs.

Additional action taken by the Council was a slew of property tax abatements on General Obligation bonds. In short, this allows the City to remove these bond obligations from the annual property tax levy and make them payable from the General Fund. This action shaved about 3.3 percent off the City's levy.

During budget discussions, council members agreed to work on additional sources of revenue to

lower the property tax burden on residents. Some revenue ideas will be visited at Council meetings in early 2023.

Technology upgrades for Decatur Police

As part of their continuing efforts to improve Public Safety and support the Decatur Police Department, City Council approved the purchase of some technology upgrades. Since the move into the current department headquarters in 2014, many computers have become outdated. 70 desktop computers will be replaced with the cost not to exceed \$82,896.

The second item approved was the renewal of the GrayKey license. This digital forensic tool allows Police to access crucial and necessary data from devices, which aids in investigations.

The computer upgrade is in the 2023 Police budget, while the renewal of the GrayKey license is being paid for by American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds.

Extension of Leadership Program

Council also authorized the City Manager to extend a partnership with the Tjaty Group to continue a successful leadership program. This ARP-supported program, ran by Decatur resident Kyle Risby, is directed at 6th, 7th, 8th graders and high schoolers. The City has found the program to be well-received and it has exceeded expectations.

The Tjaty group continues to partner with other mentorship programs in the area along with DPS-61 and the Decatur Police Department to keep guiding youth in the right direction.

More information about these topics can be found in the City Council Agenda packet, downloadable/viewable here: www.decaturil.gov/mayor-and-council/council-meetings/

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