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Hudson Bureau Confidential: Kingston's different home, business tax rates will be discussed

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A study examining Kingston's different rates for commercial versus residential taxes will be up for discussion at a public meeting April 30.

In 1988, the City of Kingston passed legislation authorizing different tax rates for residential and business properties.

Kingston taxes eligible business properties at about 1.8 times the rate of residential properties. While city business properties comprises 31 percent of the tax base, they pay 46 percent of the total tax levy.

Over time, the perceived burden on businesses has become an issue in many communities, including in Kingston.

Some argue the higher tax rate discourages commercial development and negatively impacts commercial property value. Some say the tax is detrimental to the economic viability of Kingston and translates into loss of jobs and lower property assessment overall.

On the other side, there's the perception that elimination of the differential tax rate will lead to higher residential property taxes.

The study, conducted by The Center for Research, Regional Education and Outreach at SUNY New Paltz and funded by the Dyson Foundation, looks at the issue and alternatives intended to improve Kingston's economic viability while addressing the concerns of business owners and residents.

Differential taxing began in the 1980s with state legislation authorizing municipalities to tax residential and business property classes at different rates following property revaluation. The intention was to shift the taxation burden from residential to commercial property owners.

A number of Hudson Valley communities have adopted the differential tax rates, including Beacon, Newburgh, Port Jervis, Kingston, Albany, and others

The meeting is at 6 p.m. in the Common Council Chambers at City Hall.

James Nani

Newburgh electronics cleanup

The City of Newburgh and Advanced Recovery are sponsoring public opportunities to recycle old electronics gear.

They will be from noon to 3 p.m. Friday for businesses only; and 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday for the public in the parking lot of the Newburgh Activity Center, 401 Washington St.

The cost is \$20 per car or pickup truck for business owners (please e-mail Frank at ffunicella@advancedrecovery.com) and \$10 per car or pickup truck for the public. Vehicles will be unloaded for you.

Acceptable items include monitors, printers, keyboards, VCRs, DVD players, computers, cellphones, telecom equipment, cables, fax machines, radios, modems, laptops, televisions, servers, copiers, typewriters, stereo equipment, telephones and UPS batteries.

For information, call 845-858-8809.

Michael Randall

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