

TAX INCREASES FOR POUGHKEEPSIE



The city of Poughkeepsie is dealing with the possibility of a \$3.6 million shortfall in the budget during the upcoming year. With the possibility of a shortfall, it is expected that many layoffs are going to take place and that tax increases are also going to happen. The Mayor of the city, John Tkazyik, has made it clear that layoffs and tax increases are quite inevitable. Tkazyik has said, "This is a preliminary snapshot." He also said, "I want to make the taxpayers and the workforce aware of the challenges we face." He also has also explained that the city is dealing with some economic troubles which are resulting in higher property tax collections as well as higher payments for water and sewage. As a result of what Tkazyik calls dramatic lows, the city and its spending will no longer be supported by tax revenues that have diminished. The Common Council for the city of Poughkeepsie will need to adopt the budget for 2013 by the end of this year, on the 31st of December to be exact. However, before they adopt the budget, they would like to hear from residents of the city to find out what types of cuts they would rather see. The residents may prefer to see cuts in specific services, including police and fire, instead of hiking up the property taxes. The Vice Chairman for the Common Council, Joseph Rich, has said, "I want the residents to know if we don't go over the 2 percent, there will be a serious reduction in services." He also said, "I want them to help us make the decisions." One city resident, Robert Wright II, has made it clear that he would not like to see city services cut back. He thinks that it would not be good for the city to cut back on specific services, which would include fire and police services. Instead, he says, "I would prefer to pay more taxes even though we pay a lot already." A different city resident, Bob Miller, said he understands the current dilemma that the city officials are now dealing with. Miller says, "I guess you will really have to crunch the numbers." He also said, "I'd hate to see anyone lose their job and at the same time taxes are high as it is." Several different contributors of the budget shortfall include the increase in health insurance costs along with retirement payments. The city is also dealing with a reduction in its share of available sales tax, causing the city to struggle in more than one way.